11-1945

Books of the Times

New York Times

IN eight square miles of Chicago's South Side live more than a third of a million colored Americans who comprise the second largest Negro community in the world. Bronzeville they often call their city within a city. Life there is far more difficult than in other congested and impoverished urban districts; for Bronzeville's citizens battle daily with a double problem, not only the struggle against poverty which is the lot of so many men, but also the struggle for the respect and equal opportunity which are denied them because of the color of their skins. But because Chicago Negroes vote, know few Jim Crow restrictions and are equals before the law, their numbers increase constantly. Wars and booms draw Negroes from the Deep South to the greater freedom of a Northern slum. And in bad times they do not go back. No Mississippi field hand in Chicago wastes any time longing for the sight of cotton or the smell of cane. Just what life seems like to Chicago's Negroes is the subject of "Black Metropolis"* by St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton.

12-28-45

Their book is one of the important documents of our time. Voluminous as it is, packed with charts, tables and statistics as it is, burdened down with sociological data as it is, "Black Metropolis" still surmounts the handicaps inherent in its very structure and nature and is of compelling interest. Never before have such quantities of information about Northern city Negroes been available in one volume. Never before have so many hundreds of black and brown individuals been directly quoted as to how they feel about the matters closest to their hearts. Only slightly disguised behind the make-up and crêpe hair of the sociological method, with its interviews and case histories, are the actors of innumerable real and poignant dramas, melodramas and tragedies.

Fruit of Seven Years' Research

Mr. Drake is an anthropologist, Mr. Cayton a sociologist. For this book they took over the records of a four-year investigation by the WPA. And then they continued their own research for three more years. With astonishing objectivity, considering their natural sympathy for their own race, they have assembled facts by the thousand and individual stories by the hundred. They discuss the past history of Bronzeville, its social classes, its press, religion, society, culture, education, crime, vice, poverty, politics and persistent and harassing race consciousness. It would be impossible even to indicate the scope of their report. But here are a few random facts that struck me:

12-28-45

Chicago Negro society is divided between "respectables" and "shadies." Social position depends more on education than wealth, because job opportunities are so few. A light color is a vital social asset. Those who think too much about it are "color struck." The depression turned Negroes from Republicans into Democrats. "Let Jesus lead you and Roosevelt feed you." There are 500 churches in Bronzeville and 500 policy stations. Bronzeville has the lowest average income in the city, the highest disease and death rate. Resentment against discrimination and segregation is so bitter that those who protest most vocally and who occasionally win a skirmish in the long Negro war for equal rights are the most admired leaders and heroes. They are called "Race men" and "Race heroes." Negro unemployment is three times as severe as white unemployment. Crime and delinquency are greater, too.

All these conditions are largely caused, Mr. Drake and Mr. Cayton think, by the disparity between the official beliefs and the folk beliefs of white people. Officially, white people believe in democracy, equality, fair play, etc. But unofficially they live by folk beliefs of race superiority and keeping the Negro in his place. The problem is one of education, "education of white folks." Until some progress in that direction can be made urban Negroes will continue to suffer, chiefly because of two factors.

new York N.Y.

Jobs and Housing Are Sore Spots

These are job discrimination and housing. The first puts a ceiling on Negro opportunity, sees that he is the first fired and last hired, keeps a disproportionate share of his people at menial and unpleasant labor. The housing problem is one of a segregation so rigid it creates a "black ghetto." Overcrowding and vicious overpricing of Negro housing inevitably follow the forcible stoppage of natural growth. False legends help to aggravate this situation. Most Negroes do not wish to scatter into white communities. All they wish to do is to enlarge their own communities. And that is often impossible.

"Black Metropolis," because of its very purpose of documentation, is repetitious and contains too much information for most casual readers. But it is an easy book to sample, to dig into here and there almost by chance. And almost anywhere it is rewarding. Its stories of poverty and ignorance are pitiful, of successful accomplishment impressive, of clubs and social organizations amusing, of crime and vice shocking. But its dominant impression is one of human beings faced with a frustration and humiliation which no people should be forced to bear. The normal troubles of life are heavy enough.

In a passionately angry introduction Richard Wright, the gifted author of "Native Son" and "Black Boy," predicts more race riots and argues that they are inevitable since violence is the threat of the dispossessed and Negroes are the most dispossessed of anybody.

*BLACK METROPOLIS: A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City. By St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton. Introduction by Richard Wright. 830 pages. Harcourt, Brace. $5.

Three Books Make Outstanding List

Pub. Review

2-9-46

CHICAGO — Three of the fifty "outstanding books of 1945" selected by the American Library Association were authored by Negroes. The books and their authors were "Black Boy" by Richard Wright, "Color and Democracy" by Dr. W. E. B. DuBois and "African Journey" by Mrs. Eslanda Robeson.

Powerful Novel of Negro Life

The Worker

Reviewed by
EUGENE GORDON

IF HE HOLLERS LET HIM GO, by Chester B. Himes. Doubleday Doran, $2.50.

IF HE HOLLERS LET HIM GO, the story of a Negro war worker in a Los Angeles shipyard, is a composite story of all Negro workers who hate or imagine they hate white people.

11-4-45

Bob Jones' saying, "I sat there looking at the white couple until they had crossed the sidewalk, giving them stare for stare, hate for hate"; his declaring that it "shook" him because "they looked so goddamned startled" when he asked for a job, "As if some friendly dog had come in through the door and said, 'I can talk'; his declaring that all he wanted was that "the white folks" let him alone, "not say anything to me, not even look at me"—when he talks like this you know that what Bob Jones is saying is the sum-total of the worst thinking and saying of practically every Negro, at one time or another, in these United States.

12-30-45

If **He Hollers Let Him Go** is, for that reason, a novel that every white person ought to read. It strips people of their conceit; it probes to their buried and concealed chauvinism. It will shock you, but it will do you good.

Every Negro community leader ought to read this book. The so-called average Negro worker does not need to read it, unless it be to learn how to avoid Bob Jones' mistakes. Bob Joneses are everywhere that there are Negro ghettoes, for these Jimcrow settlements breed youth like him. The chief difference between any Negro youth you may meet on Lenox Ave. and Bob Jones is that no one Harlem youth possesses all the shortcomings of Chester B. Himes' character. But the oppression suffered by the black man in the United States has so embittered the Negro that it would not be hard to find one who possessed nearly all of Bob Jones' shortcomings.

12-30-45

Communists should read the book, so that they may be reminded of much we forgot in the past period. It will shock many of them. It will suggest that there is a hell of a lot of work to be done among the Negro and white masses by Communists, who have the only program for the full freedom of the Negro people.

The Himes story is, briefly, the account of a Los Angeles shipyard worker's feelings about and attitude toward his white and his black fellow workers up the time he encountered the white woman who cried "rape." The story thereafter tells of his attempt to escape consequences of the charge.

It is a hard, bold, brutal story told in memorable language. Because Bob Jones is more a symbol of outraged Negro youth than a typical Negro worker, he frequently steps out of character. It would take a far more skilled writer than young Himes to prevent it. But the story is not a tract; it is not "propaganda"; it is not an allegory.

It is a well-written shocker of Negro life in modern America. It is a story of life in the United States today. It is a warning to everybody who pretends any kind of interest in the Negro question to live up to his pretensions or be damned by on-rushing events.

You may not like the novel. You may say, as some certainly will, that this is the kind of book that should not be written. You may wince and squirm, whether you be black or white, as it touches the quick of some deeply-buried and forgotten experience. But what you must remember is that **this is the way things are** and that this novel merely records the ugly truth.

Author Reviews History of Negro in America; Says U. S. 'Succumbs to Folklore'

Laura Bystander

The history of the Negro in America, reflected through the writings of Negro poets, was reviewed here Wednesday afternoon, November 14, by Richard Wright, 37 year-old novelist, before one of the largest attendances of the Des Moines (white) Women's Club at the Hoyt Sherman Place here.

The author of the best sellers, "Native Son," and "Black Boy," Mr. Wright spoke on the Negro's contribution to American Literature," contrasting the writings of European Negroes who could write in harmony with the culture of their own lands, with the works of Negroes, who were snatched from Africa, robbed of their tribal culture, held in bondage and deprived of the culture of the new land—America.

Des Moines

Mr. Wright opened his lecture by quoting excerpts from the writings of European Negroes, Alexander Dumas, French author of "Monte Cristo" and "Three Musketters"; and Alexander Pushkin of Russia.

11-22-45

"Is this Negro writing?" Mr. Wight asked and then answered that "being a Negro was the least important thing" about those writers who wrote out of the commonly shared culture of their age.

Slave Ship

In 1761, when a slave ship from Africa came to the shores of America, from the auction block all of the slaves were sold, except a frail little girl, later named Phyllis, who was bought by a Boston family, the John Wheatleys.

Slavery had not yet cast its ugly shadow—the minds of the white people were not so warped—and the Wheatly family gave Phyllis, who displayed talent for writing, a classic learning, Mr. Wright spoke as he began the long line of American Negro poets.

Phyllis Wheatley's early writings showed no traces of her being oppressed. She wrote of the culture of her age. She wrote of George Washington.

RICHARD WRIGHT

"Then what is Negro writing?" Mr. Wright asked. "Being a Negro —had to do with the American scene."

With the growth of slavery the Negro poets decried the killings and burnings. The brutality then compared with Hitler's brutality of 1933, Mr. Wright said.

After Phyllis Wheatley the speaker chose the works of George Moses Horton (1797-1883) in North Carolina, a slave of the Horton family, who was passed around like a tool from one member of the family to another.

"Something had happened since Phyllis Wheatley wrote," Mr. Wright said as he quoted from Horton's "On Liberty and Slavery":

> Alas! And am I born for this,
> To wear this slavish chain
> Deprived of all created bliss,
> Through hardship, toil and pain!

Horton was a "trapped man— a split man living in a culture which he could not participate. Horton's cry for freedom was destined to become the tradition of Negro literature in the United States."

After Horton, Mr. Wright named James M. Whitfield, (1830-1870) Boston barber, who wrote of that land that rejected him in his poem "America"; then Frances Ellen Walkins Harper (1825-1911), whose eye were filled with scenes of violence, shown in her poem, "Bury Me in a Free Land."

11-22-45

"The Negro in America—meant something made here in America. He never had a chance to take his eyes from the auction blocks, from constant lynchings, Mr. Wright continued as he introduced more Negro poets, who wrote of Negroes who labored among men who hated them. Albery A. Whitman (1851-1902) was next with his best known work in "Rape of Florida."

"We see the beginning of complexity. The split in Negro personality deepens. The basic theme is set—and all black lips that sing will pay tribute to oppression," Mr. Wright spoke.

Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906) whose writings reveal a lighter and lyrical point of view, for the benefit of white consumption, at times spoke out bluntly what was in his heart, Mr. Wright informed.

Dunbar Tried

Dunbar tried deliberately to turn his eyes from this vision of . He tried to ring a unity. 'Other black singers cared less about what their whites wanted and wrote what they felt."

"From 1761 to 1900 was kind of unity that knit Negro expressions together. Mr. Wright noted and saw after Emancipation of the Negro a separation and stratafication. "White attitudes hardened and intensification of pressure was put against the Negro."

11-22-45

The speaker old of two tendencies —two levels that appeared in the writings.

"These levels remained apart until the depression. Negroes who accepted what their lives were—saw escape in religion, jazz, blues and folk songs.

The spirituals, like "Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child," "Steal Away," "He Never Said a Mumbling Word," and songs of rebellion came into being.

At the bottom was the knowledge of the duo-life the Negro lived. Many of them knew that their hope was hopeless and out of this the blues were born.

Among the migrant Negroes who always found that it was the "always holy, righteous and uplifting that crushed them," sprung the "dirty dozens."

"What else would you expect of people—kicked out of life into the darkness?" Mr. Wright queried.

Waring Cuney (1906-) summed up the meaning of Jim Crow in the war. What was happening upstairs?" the speaker asked and replied that someone was finding out that "if you prick me—I bruise; if you put fire to me—I burn—just like you."

Following W. E. B. DuBois, writer of free verse poems was James Weldon Johnson, whose "eyes were riveted upon the horrors of lynchings."

Horrors Remained

"Horrors that confronted the Negro remained during the war and peace, summer and winter, night and day," Mr. Wright spoke.

Claude McKay (1889-) with his "White Houses," in which he wrote "Your door is shut against my tightened face"; and Jean Toomer (1894-) and Countee Cullen (1903-) were writing at the apex of lynching. They spoke of the conflict of human needs that all but overwhelmed the Negro.

"This is their judgment upon you and your world," Mr. Wright told his audience.

"Despair is not the entire picture," Mr. Wright encouraged as he told of the 'first real break" that World War I provided and Soviet Russia sending out its calls to the oppressed.

Before that time the Negro had to depend upon the "white definition"—but suddenly that spell was broken, forever, in the minds of the rejected Negro. Color consciousness lost some of its edge and a new sense of identification came to the Negro.

"The Negro made wholehearted committments to a new world. Langston Hughes visited Russia — where Phyllis Wheatley visited the parlors of George Washington.

Catching this "new vision" were writers like Sterling A. Brown, Melvin Tolson who gave the Negro expression a wider base, Margaret Walker and Richard Wright, himself.

11-22-45

Question Freedom

"What value is there in writing like this?" Mr. Wright asked; and he responded: "we write out of what life gives us in the form of experience. The American Negro is the one group that consistently raises this question of freedom."

The speaker revealed that from the French, the soldiers of the Red army, the Brazilians "come questions about the American Negro—living here in the greatest pretense of democracy on earth."

Following Mr. Wright's lecture, the meeting was open for questions—but there were no questions asked.

Addresses Center Board

Mr. Wright was guest speaker Wednesday evening at the annual dinner meeting of the Community Center Board, which was held in the art room of the Hoyt Sherman Place, where 108 guests heard the speaker on the "Negro Problems in Amercia."

"When you raise the Negro problem—you raise a hornet's nest," Mr. Wright spoke as he told how folklore penetrated down—into the home by the radio, press and movies, in religion—to teach that the "Negro is inferior."

"The Negro problem has become symbolic of the world problem. America today stands foremost in the world. The first object in the next war will be to get the United States and I think we present a very vulnerable target with the Negro problem in the United States.

"How vulnerable we are—we succumb to folk lore; we submit to myths in matters of race in our every day living."

Mr. Wright talked informally with a group of Negro citizens who welcomed him at the home of Atty. and Mrs. James B. Morris, late Wednesday night. While here he was guest at the home of Mr. and Mrs. A. A. Alexander. He is on a tour, speaking to small white colleges, on the problems of the Negro.

11-1945 "African Journey"

Books of the Times

The New York Times
New York, New York
9-9-45

By FRANCIS HACKETT

WHEN people say "one world," they defer to two facts. One is that transportation makes every land accessible. The other is that, every land being accessible, no class and no race can any longer live for itself exclusively. A generation ago it was possible for an ex-President of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt, to come back from Africa or Brazil with grand trophies of the chase and relatively few words about the Negro. Africa was segregated.

Mrs. E. Goode Robeson

Now Africa has moved from being a silent continent to a talkie. Its 150,000,000 Negroes have a fellowship with 13,000,000 American citizens, with 10,000,000 West Indians and with many millions in Brazil. The Africa that was pushed around in the early years of the League of Nations is no longer a Dark Continent. It may not yet have peeled off its European masters, but it has come into daylight and into speech. To be ignorant of it is to borrow trouble or else to leave Africa to the Soviet Union.

An easy way of testing Africa's nearness is to accompany Eslanda Goode Robeson on her "African Journey."* Mrs. Paul Robeson happens to have had African ancestry, but she is a typical dynamic American in her culture. She comes of a well-to-do family. Her grandfather, she says, the late Francis Lewis Cardozo, "was well known for his early awareness of the Negro problem." She has herself been a technician at Presbyterian Hospital and a student at Teachers College, later studying anthropology with Malinowski and others in London.

Sees Africans as Brothers and Sisters

The Africa she sees is a land in which the inhabitants are as much her own brothers and sisters as are her fellow-citizens in America. "The white people in Africa do not want educated Negroes traveling around seeing how their brothers live, nor do they want those brothers seeing Negroes from other parts of the world." But Mrs. Robeson doesn't feel that way. She is a one-worlder, though she extends her ego more easily to other Negroes than she does to the culpable whites.

If a white reader can scarcely help regretting Mrs. Robeson's aversion to white Portuguese, white Boers, white Belgians and poor white trash in general, the total effect of "African Journey" is anything but unsympathetic. For one thing, she can't help making us feel we know her and like herself and her son. Hers is an extremely attractive and natural book. Another kind of woman might annoy us by traveling like a princess. It was in a "double first-class stateroom with private bath" that she and her 9-year-old Pauli went from London to Capetown. She kept in constant touch with her celebrated husband by long distance all the time she was away; the red carpet was out for her everywhere and it was from the Government House at Entebbe that she and her boy boarded the plane to Alexandria. But instead of repelling us by her evident overprivilege, we forget it in the much more pressing evidence of her aliveness to the African people, an aliveness that in its essence is, let us say, Jeffersonian.

9-9-45

If the British dangle a carrot in front of an African's nose, whether it is done by a District Commissioner or a Governor, and whether the name on the carrot is "King" or "President," makes no difference. Mrs. Robeson sees the colonial device. She sees the Negro workers in their "locations," which are economic concentration camps. She gives many photographs of mournful and patient faces. The evidence of manipulation and exploitation is exposed by her as any Jeffersonian might have exposed it. But curiously enough, it is to Russia that she looks for comprehension—comprehension, that is to say, of the Negro as educable, as endowed with his own precious native instruments of language, custom, music, ritual, technique, architecture, not to stress his own warrior caste or his own rigid class system.

Knows Russia From Living There

Being a warm-hearted woman, Mrs. Robeson observes the needs of the African Negroes, and it strikes her to the heart to have their white conquerors so ignore them as persons. Hence her full-hearted tribute to the Russians. She and her mother and Paul Robeson know Russia from living in it; and while she salutes Julian Huxley for his wise words about African education, it is Russia that has won her allegiance. "We look at those who have enslaved us, and find them decadent. Injustice and greed and conscious inhumanity are terribly destructive. Yes, I am glad and proud I am Negro. * * * In Russia I was excited and profoundly moved to see for myself how the so-called 'backward,' 'primitive' peoples from the formerly remote wastes of Siberia and Asia have been stepped up to active and constructive participation in a highly industrialized state. The Institute of Minorities in Leningrad is a place to visit, study and revisit."

Mrs. Robeson makes us see the Mountains of the Moon, and she told the natives of Toro, in sight of those mountains, the help that "great scholars and teachers" in Russia had given to their own "more primitive tribes." Thus the headwaters of a political Nile are nourished. When one thinks of a sore like Bilbo on the face of American democracy it is no wonder that an American like Mrs. Robeson goes to Russia for her ideology. Her book may not be the most tactful and diplomatic ever written, but through its lively travelogue it transmits a clear and ringing denunciation of capitalism's tendency to rob the blind of their pennies. Her own eyes, at any rate, have not been blinded, nor was her excellent camera sealed in Africa.

NEW BRUNSWICK, N. J.
TIMES
Circ. S. 16,513
SEP 9 - 1945

SAYS AFRICA MUST BE CONSIDERED

For the first time since the penetration of Africa by the white man, the people of the world will have to consider the people of Africa, writes Eslanda Goode Robeson in her book just published, "Africa Journey" by John Day. The book is made up of pertinent sections of the journal which she kept when she went to Africa to do her field work as part of her study for a doctor's degree in anthropology.

The charming and talented Harlem girl, who became the wife of the versatile concert singer, actor and former Rutgers athlete, Paul Robeson, is well known in New Brunswick where she has a legion of friends.

ESLANDA G. ROBESON

Her first book, "Paul Robeson, Negro," published in 1930 by Harper Bros., was written while the Robesons lived in England. Her current volume is the outcome of her trip to Africa with her family. The journey was made for two reasons, one so Paul Robeson could show his son, Paul Jr., that continent, and so Mrs. Robeson could do the field work for her degree. Robeson, who is proud of being a Negro, said he took his son to Africa as "I wanted him to have roots. To know and feel that he is a Negro." While in Africa, Mrs. Robeson kept a voluminous diary and took many pictures, as she is a semi-professional photographer, which formed the backlog of the book. She also collected African art which was exhibited at the city library in Springfield, Mass., last year.

Mrs. Robeson writes that Africa is now just around the corner for the modern airliner for it was the hopping-off place for the European invasion and is the stop-over place for important military lines to the Far East. For this reason, Dark Africa is out in the spotlight of modern world attention and must be reckoned with in the post-war planning.

The people of the world, in fighting for their own freedom, have come to sense that no man can be free until all men are free, comments Mrs. Robeson, who points out that millions of Negroes, including a host of Africans, are in the armies in World War II.

The Negro in his native Africa is not universally free, forbidden to enter. The African who for centuries before she finds. Paradoxically one of the chief exploiters of the native Negro is the descendant of the freed American slave of the Civil War repatriated to Liberia. The Americo-Liberians, as these people are known, she finds, have followed the pattern of other colonial people—exploiting and enslaving the Africans, the Liberians.

This shameful picture, Mrs. Robeson protests, is a disgrace to the Liberian Republic and the United States which sponsors it. She found segregation, sponsored by the whites, even among colored people, with those of mixed blood living in sections which the full-blooded Negro natives were ing in sections which the full-blooded Negro natives were
arrival of the white man had mined metals for his own
refused licenses to mine for himself, although he
in the mines owned by the white colonist.

THE HORIZON

Mrs. Robeson Finds Herself Very Much at Home When She Visits "Her People"

By P. L. PRATTIS

Pittsburgh Courier Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 9-15-45

I DON'T recall whether I ever told you about that time in San Francisco when the Russian -American Institute had laid a grand banquet in the Gold Room of the Palace Hotel for the Russian delegates to the United Nations Conference and, beaming among those seated at the speakers' table, my eye spotted lovely, assiduous Eslanda Goode Robeson. I felt very, very good that night. Six hundred guests had paid ten dollars a plate for the viands and potables and none but the elect of the Soviet Union and other places had seats of honor. Essie was among them, even though Vijaya Laksmi Pandit, Nehru's sister, sat among us hoi polloi. Essie sat there busily conversing, in Russian or something, with the Soviet ambassador to Canada and one of the labor delegates. The banquet was ended when the toastmaster eloquently called attention to Essie's presence and asked all assembled to rise in tribute as the closing anthem was sung.

Mr. Prattis

* * *

WELL, IT'S not about Essie that I wish to write a word, but about her latest book, "African Journey," describing her experiences a few years ago when she and her eight-year-old son, Pauli, decided that they would like to go home and visit the brother. There were two reasons: (1) Mrs. Robeson was studying anthropology and wished to obtain some on-the-spot information, and (2) she had become impatient of English people telling her that she was not like Africans, that they were primitive, she wasn't. "I AM primitive!" spurted Essie and made off from Southampton to Cape Town.

Mrs. Robeson is one of the rare good conversationalists one finds these days. Her intelligence is superior, her knowledge is broad and her enthusiasm is infectious. And she knows how to tell a story.

* * *

"AFRICAN JOURNEY" is just exactly what she proposed that it should be, a fast-moving anecdotal record of visits througout South and East Africa from Cape Town to Khartoum. She met the people, the natives, of high and low estate, in their homes, at their meals, their baths, their parties and their ceremonies and she found, as she had suspected, that they were no whit different, basically, from her. She didn't even find the veneer of white folks culture with which she was burdened, a handicap of any sort to her appreciation and regard for her folk from Bechuanaland to Uganda.

It is because Mrs. Robeson has conversationally presented the Africans she met as fellow humans with their own accustomed ways of doing things and not as circus freaks or "studies" that you will enjoy "African Journey" if you're lucky enough to obtain a copy. She doesn't meet any types, except the white type of colonial administrator whose point of view is usually akin to that of Bilbo.

* * *

HERE AND there, there is a deft drawing aside of the curtain and one sees the mean picture of colonialism, of the natives robbed of their best lands, of grossly-underpaid native workers, of inconsequential folk from the mother country elevated to a money aristocracy on the backs of the natives, of the rankest sort of jim crow, of robbery pure and undefiled, or "face" of the white man which must be protected at any cost and of the use of gunpowder to promote good behaviour.

I am sure that when Mrs. Robeson was in San Francisco she longed for some of the good things she had to eat deep in the heart of Africa.

11-1945

African Journey

NEW YORK, N. Y.
TIMES
Circ. D. 419,447 - S. 805,967
AUG 9 - 1945

Books of the Times

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Knows Russia From Living There

Being a warm-hearted woman, Mrs. Robeson observes the needs of the African Negroes, and it strikes her to the heart to have their white conquerors so ignore them as persons. Hence her full-hearted tribute to the Russians. She and her mother and Paul Robeson know Russia from living in it; and while she salutes Julian Huxley for his wise words about African education, it is Russia that has won her allegiance. "We look at those who have enslaved us, and find them decadent. Injustice and greed and conscious inhumanity are terribly destructive. Yes, I am glad and proud I am Negro. * * * In Russia I was excited and profoundly moved to see for myself how the so-called 'backward,' 'primitive' peoples from the formerly remote wastes of Siberia and Asia have been stepped up to active and constructive participation in a highly industrialized state. The Institute of Minorities in Leningrad is a place to visit, study and revisit."

Mrs. Robeson makes us see the Mountains of the Moon, and she told the natives of Toro, in sight of those mountains, the help that "great scholars and teachers" in Russia had given to their own "more primitive tribes." Thus the headwaters of a political Nile are nourished. When one thinks of a sore like Bilbo on the face of American democracy it is no wonder that an American like Mrs. Robeson goes to Russia for her ideology. Her book may not be the most tactful and diplomatic ever written, but through its lively travelogue it transmits a clear and ringing denunciation of capitalism's tendency to rob the blind of their pennies. Her own eyes, at any rate, have not been blinded, nor was her excellent camera sealed in Africa.

Africans, Too, Are People

[AFRICAN JOURNEY by Eslanda Goode Robeson, John Day Co., N. Y. $3.50]

Reviewed by Ruby Hall

A GREAT MANY OF THE BOOKS most of us have read on Africa have left us with a slightly apprehensive feeling about its inhabitants. These books have been put down with our vanity pleased that we are Americans with no possible connection with Africa. Mrs. Robeson's book will surprise those readers who have been inclined to disavow Negro ties with the great continent of Africa because her point of view is quite the opposite. "Journey Through Africa," by Eslanda Goode Robeson, wife of Paul Robeson, great baritone and recent star of Shakespeare's *Othello*, is an important book. Though she spent less than six months in the country and in that short time rushed from one place to another, she adds to her personal report well-chosen quotations from many authoritative studies of the African people, their economy and political history and gives the reader a line to further study.

RUBY HALL

Mrs. Robeson in her travelogue presents the Africans to us as people with the same ambitions, emotions, and weaknesses as the rest of us as follows: "We enjoyed a lot of gossip while we worked, became very good friends, examined each others hair, skin, clothes. We each found out how the other managed her husband, home and children.

"It was a wonderful experience for me. I learned a great deal about the very important business of living, and as a result have rearranged my sense of values to some considerable extent. The leisurely approach, the calm facing of circumstances and the making of the most of them, is very different from the European hustle and hurry and drive and worry and frustration when things don't go well. The African gets things done, gets a great deal done, but gets it done without the furious wear and tear on the nervous system. Because the European doesn't see his own hustle and bustle. he says the African is lazy . . . stagnant, indifferent, sluggish. . . ."

INTELLIGENT PEOPLE

For the very first time we get a picture of the Africans as intelligent people, anxious to have first-hand reports of England, Paris, New York—and Hollywood of all places! They wanted Mrs. Robeson's suggestions on higher education for the African people, on patriachal administration, her answers to leading questions about the Indians in America, about Negroes—their education and political status in America and Europe and their attitude toward Abyssinia.

In the form of a diary, in prose as fast-moving as the boats, automobiles, trains and planes that carried the author around Africa, are accounts of villages and people, all described as parts of an important adventure for Mrs. Robeson and her son, Pauli. Like many intelligent people, Mrs. Robeson wanted to know first hand, more about the people and the continent her forebears came from.

She was also tremendously interested in the problems of the 173 million black people of the West Indies and America as well as those in Africa; concerned about the difficulties of the 390 million Indians in India and the 450 million Chinese in China, as well as the problems of all minorities everywhere.

So she started reading everything about Africa she could lay hands on. Her search landed her in the middle of anthropology. She found it all very exciting and challenging. She said: "Lots of Americans, when they could afford it, went back to see their 'old country.' I remember wanting very much to see my 'old country,' and wondering what it would be like." She made plans, and left England by sea for Capetown and Port Elizabeth, right at the tip of South Africa.

TELLS AMUSING TALES

Then she made connections with an African friend who had finished medicine at Edinburgh University and had gone home to Alice, Cape Province, to practice; his sister, Frieda, and her husband, Zach Matthews, whom she had known in London when he was attending the Malinowski seminars

They and their children also lived at Alice where Matthews was teaching at Fort Hare, the African college. From there Mrs. Robeson's itinerary led her to Johannesburg, Tangayika, Kenya, Uganda, Anglo Egyptian Sudan and Egypt. She flew through Greece, Italy, France and finally back to England.

"Journey Through Africa" contains many amusing stories and anecdotes which add to the relish of the book. Africa has at long last come into focus for thoughtful world attention. Interest since the middle 30's has reluctantly been directed toward "the Dark Continent." Readers who believe, and even those who do not believe, that the 173 million black people of the world will go far because they ARE black, will eagerly seize this book. Mrs. Robeson looks forward and backward with pride. She accuses the colonial system in the simple language of a mother determined that her son shall be free.

SPRINGFIELD, MASS.
REPUBLICAN
Circ. D. 12,360
AUG 18 1945

THE WORLD OF BOOKS

'AFRICAN JOURNEY'

Mrs Paul Robeson's Study of the 'Native Problem'

Mrs Paul Robeson's long-standing concern with the problems of the colored people in America is well known, especially in our own New England where for several years she has been one of the most energetic and articulate workers in the cause of the Negro. It is, however, not only the Negro in America in whom she is interested. What some of us are only reluctantly beginning to realize—that racial inequality and intolerance all over the world are a part of the same problem and that oppression of minority groups anywhere is the vital concern of all of us—she recognized years ago.

"African Journey," by Eslanda Goode Robeson (John Day), is an account of a trip she made with her young son in 1936 in an endeavor to learn for herself something about the "native problem" in the land of her ancestors. Disturbed by the conventional white phraseology in relation to "primitive" and "backward" races (employed in her courses in anthropology in London) yet realizing the difficulty of refuting the old "you haven't lived with these people as we have" argument, she determined to see for herself. Her book is composed of extracts from the journal she kept on her trip, with some of the facts brought up to date.

Regarded solely as a travel book it is an exceedingly interesting account (made more so by the pages of photographs which illustrate it), for Mrs Robeson visited places and talked to people that the ordinary white tourist never sees. She went through the native locations and reserves and the colored sections of the African cities she visited ("native" and "colored", are not synonymous in South Africa), she studied the culture of the herdspeople in Uganda (anthropological field work was her excuse for the African journey) and she made a trip into the Congo. Sometimes she stayed with native Africans, sometimes with white officials, and always she looked and listened and talked to the people.

Her book is, of course, more than an absorbing travelog, since the native problem, rather than quaint local customs and strange scenery, was her main preoccupation. What she found —discrimination against both native and colored, strict segregation, terrific taxes, lack of educational opportunities and appalling housing conditions in the locations—should be no surprise to readers who in the last few years have been able to read equally severe indictments of the African native policy from the pens of white observers. Conditions varied, of course, in different sections of Africa, and white attitudes varied, too, as they do in our own country, but in general it is a dark picture that Mrs Robeson paints, one lightened only by the indomitable courage, dignity and hopefulness of the natives themselves.

Mrs Robeson has been moved to publish this account of her African experiences at this time when the white world is, because of the upheaval caused by the war, more keenly alive to the importance of Africa and its people than ever before. Proudly conscious of her own African heritage, deliberately rejecting the contention that she and other educated Negroes are "different" from the rest of their race, she feels that what educational and economic advantages have done for her they will do for other Negroes. "Africans are people" with the same hopes and desires and needs as other men, and their brothers, after being blinded for centuries by their own vanity and fear, are finally opening their eyes to this fact.

W. H. H.

11-1945

" All Brave Sailors"

Unity on SS Booker T. Washington Inspires One of War's Best Books

The Worker
The Daily New York,
New York 9-16-45

By SAMUEL SILLEN

I HAVE read dozens of American books about this war, but none that I recall as exciting, human, and richly significant as John Beecher's story of the S.S. Booker T. Washington, **All Brave Sailors** (L. B. Fischer, $2.50).

As you read this magnificent account of the Booker T. Washington's Negro and white crew, you realize as never before that most war books have merely brushed the surface of a vast and transforming experience. They have given us an adventure without people. They have only haltingly expressed the anti-fascist meaning of the war.

This book is different. It hits the highest level of writing about World War II. When you reach the last page—and you hate to reach it—you know that the glowing images and profound lessons will stick with you for a good long time.

Captain Mulzac

The author sailed for two years as Purser of the Booker T. Washington under Captain Hugh Mulzac, first Negro Captain commissioned by the U. S. Merchant Marine. Years of rank discrimination had condemned Captain Mulzac to the beach. Even after Pearl Harbor, when every available white skipper was mustered into service, Hugh Mulzac had to be idle. He got his Liberty ship in the fall of 1942 only as the result of terrific pressure from the National Negro Congress, the National Maritime Union, the national CIO, the Negro press. He was finally told to round up Negro seamen for the crew. 9-16-45

"Do I have to sail with an all-Negro crew?" Captain Mulzac asked.

"Isn't that what you people want?"

"No," Captain Mulzac said. "All we want is a chance to sail in our ratings. We don't want segregation. If the Booker T. Washington is going to be a Jimcrow ship, I don't want to be master of her."

And this was one Liberty ship that wasn't Jimcrow. All the races of mankind found an equal place on her. In the latest group, Beecher reports, there were 25 Caucasians, 17 Negroes, two Malasians, one Mongolian and one American Indian. "We who sailed under Captain Hugh Mulzac were no band of saints, no select company of fanatic volunteers, but just the common run of men. . . . Among us were white men, born and bred in the South, who took orders from Negro officers, ate and slept alongside Negro shipmates, went ashore to foreign parts with Negroes—and on occasion knocked down those who wanted to make something of it."

Working Unity

9-16-45

The working unity of the S.S. Booker T. Washington—that is the main theme of this story. "Everybody meshed together, doing the common job." And what a job it was! It meant ducking enemy subs, piling stuff in from North Africa to Italy, hacking a course through to Murmansk. Anybody who still thinks these merchant seamen weren't as much a part of this war as the marines on Okinawa should turn off the radio and read this book.

But Beecher isn't trying to blow up the tough spots here. The workers on this boat knew to begin with that fighting fascism was a tough job, and they were glad to do it. When they did get riled it was because somebody was fighting fascism with one hand, shooting at Nazis but stepping on democratic rights, too.

On their own ship they bust the barriers of prejudice by living, working, and fighting together. They wanted to see that done all along the line. "What we need are mixed Army units, mixed Navy ships, and I mean mixed as the Booker T. Washington is mixed; from the topside down through the galley to the engine room below, mixed in every fo'c'sle, in every mess-room." 9-16-45

Proud of their union, the NMU, the men of the Booker T. Washington represented the very best in the labor movement, the lifeblood and hope of the American nation. There is Harry Alexander, ship's delegate, bawling hell out of some new crew members for selling food to soldiers being taken overseas in the 'tweendecks of the ship.

"You think you guys can get away with selling food to soldiers on here? You think this is just another ship? Who wants this ship to be just another ship? Is that what you all want?"

"No!" says everybody.

Democracy In Action

9-16-45

"I want you guys that have been selling food to soldiers to know that this is the Booker T. Washington," Alex goes on. "We don't sell any food to soldiers on this ship. These soldiers are our guests on here. Anything we've got is theirs, free. I'm telling you it's a big honor to this ship to be carrying these soldiers. They're our brothers in this war, and here some of you guys are trying to make money out of them. . . ."

Democracy is more than a word on this ship. It means chipping in to help the Yugoslav Partisans, a helping hand to the refugees from Franco Spain in North Africa. It means Captain Mulzac teaching a navigation class on the shelter deck and classes every evening after supper in Engineering, Mathematics, Cooking, Radio, First Aid. It means ship's meetings, forums on world problems and trade unionism. It means hating discrimination right down to your bones.

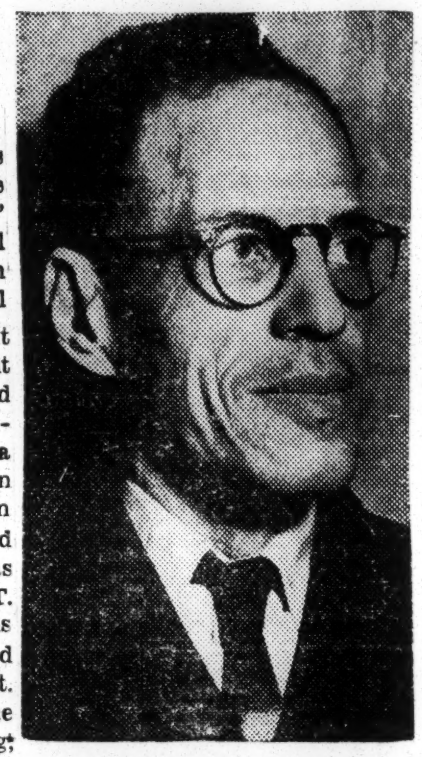
On Beecher's first trip the news about the Detroit race riot came over the radio. "Here we were," he writes, "penned up, men of all races and many nationalities, in the narrow quarters of a small ship, under the strain of constant danger, restricted by the blackout to a few crowded fo'c'sles and mess rooms, yet there was no conflict among us. It ought to be a lot easier even to avoid conflict in all of Detroit, in vast America, in this enormous world. You could never convince anybody who was ever a part of the Booker T. Washington that race conflict is something natural, not engineered by a few to keep the many apart. It is the most natural thing in the world for people to get along; when they are doing a job together."

American Tradition

9-16-45

The man who wrote this book with such intense feeling and understanding is a descendant of the famous Beecher family. The first American member, also John Beecher, landed here from England in 1637, "no different from the millions of imigrants who came on the later tides, just a working stiff looking for a chance." The author's great-grandfather Edward Beecher, brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe and Henry Ward Beecher, was a founder along with his friend Elijah Lovejoy of the Illinois Anti-Slavery Society in 1837.

John Beecher himself, born and brought up in the South, was for a time a regional director for the FEPC. He not only hates Jimcrow with every ounce of his being but knows what forces keep it alive. I remember vividly the passionate poems of freedom he was writing when we were colleagues at Wisconsin 15 years ago. This magnificent book grows out of his whole life and background. It is written in the language of the people, with simplicity, with modesty, and with fire. No reader of this paper should miss this reading experience, so vital in its implications for the problems which our nation now urgently faces.



CAPT. HUGH MULZAC

JOHN BEECHER

Book Notes

Louis Adamic's **A Nation of Nations** will show how each of the various groups of the American population helped to make our country great. (Harper and Bros., October).

Dr. Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., Negro Congressman from New York, outlines a program for his people in **Marching Blacks.** (Dial Press. October). 9-16-45

Kenneth Davis was commissioned by Doubleday, Doran two years ago to write the life story of Dwight Eisenhower. The book, **Soldier of Democracy,** will be published Nov. 15.

62-1945

N.Y. Amsterdam News
N.Y. N.Y.

About Books

By CONSTANCE H. CURTIS

(Editor's Note: This week's column was written by Mr. Melvin Tapley, artist for the Amsterdam News.)

The Best of Negro Humor, A Negro Digest Publication, 106 pp., $.50.

The 'Rankin-file' says that the nigrah was 'born to laugh and grin' but the "the Best of Negro Humor", a Negro Digest publication, shows that today, at least, he's doing it with a vengeance.

One of the greatest desires of all mankind is, according to Dale Carnegie, to feel superior. Of course, the 'Rankin-file' have grandiose ideas of their own importance and when we begin sniping and puncturing those balloon supermen with jokes, cartoons, and otherwise ridiculing them, we are actually destroying their faith in themselves. Brother, we're getting under the skin of even the most thick-skinned of the American fascists and really are, as Langston Hughes says in his introduction to the "Best of Negro Humor", probably "laughing them to death." 7-28-45

Under such categories as 'In High Places', Race Relations, Pride and Prejudice, and Foreign Affairs these gems of humor, on the whole, really attack all the fronts of majority-minority relationships.

Adding to this organized offensive are the wit and satire welling from the pen and brush of Jay Jackson and Oliver Harrington. These reproductions of Jay Jackson's popular "So What" cartoons published in the Chicago Defender and Ol Harrington's famed "Dark Laughter" featuring the now classic character, Bootsie and his "Don Burr" drawings of People's Voice, are eloquently humorous, often satirically commenting upon these same current issues that the writers are using their literary flame-throwers on.

However, I disagree with the editors in selecting the title "Best of Negro Humor" and their making an additional note to this title by saying "a collection of jokes, cartoons, anecdotes, and wit with a slightly Sepia hue", just as I disagree with the attitude expressed in the opening sentence of Arthur P. Davis' article, "Dark Laughter", that is included in the book. 7-28-45

Mr. Davis, one of the better known Negro college professors, as the editor's note informs us, says "Negro humor is one of the most **delightful** products of our American culture." He says that he is referring, "of course, to the genuine variety not the meretricious racial humor of stage and fiction," but that does not excuse him for that first statement.

Perhaps, I am suffering from a psychological 'tic' and gagging over the proverbial 'gnat' but I think the careless use of a word like **delightful** or a phrase like '. . . . Slightly Sepia hue' shows a 'Massattitude' highly reminiscent of the objectionable Readers' Digest anecdotal observations of the Negro. Both Professor Davis and Editors Johnson and Burns have fallen into the jimcrow trap of assigning certain traits to a particular racial group which are actually universal in application. The professor is even guilty of a condescension as skillful as any of the interracial-excursion acrobatics by confused 'liberals'.

"The Best of Negro Humor" is undoubtedly among the best of humorous writing but very often the only reason for attributing certain stories to this particular race is that the word 'Negro' is included in the description of one or more of the characters or by the dialect, though modified from the usual stereotype, which some of the people use in the various tales unfurled.

But who am I to question editors and professors when they have really done more good—much more good—than harm?

This collection of the wit of leading writers and artists promises you many laughs and much food for thought and in this day of rationing when foods of all kinds is hard to get, this certainly is **must** reading.

The Negro Digest suggests sending your copy, when you are finished, to a serviceman. Buy an extra one and send it to Representatives Rankin, Bilbo and their cohorts. There might be something to this 'laugh them to death' business!

Keep 'em squirming, eh, Charlie?

11-1945

Bibliography

A Primer On Race Relations

Under the sponsorship of the Council Against Intolerance in America with headquarters in New York, John Becker has presented to the American people a simple, concise and inspiring story of the contribution of Negroes in America, which may serve as the basis of an increasing maturity of outlook between white and Negro citizens under the caption, "The Negro in American Life." The book is priced at One Dollar and may be secured direct by writing to the Council in New York.

"The American Negro is a farmer, a worker, a writer and a hero." That is the arresting language used in its unfolding pages. It states further, "in the United States, by our Declaration of Independence and by our Bill of Rights and by our laws and by our traditions, we have promised equality and democracy to all," assures Mr. Becker.

The Negro is shown playing a proud and inspiring role in Africa and modern art; in education; as writers and authors and as poets. Liberty ships, named and floated in honor of Negro Americans are pictured and described, and a graphic word by word story and pictures of Negro heroes and Negro nurses in the present war are given. There you will see the Negro soldier in the Solomons, in Normandy. You will see noted scholars in literature and in science, and in every field of human endeavor.

"The main purpose for this book," concludes the author, "is to make us think — to make us think straight. There is no question about the fact that the world is getting smaller as it knit together by fast travel and fast communication. What we do at home is no longer secret to the rest of the world. The peoples of this one world are mostly what we call "colored." These people are growing in strength and independence. When we in America talk of the Four Freedoms all these people look to our treatment of the American Negro to see what we really mean."

About Books

By CONSTANCE H. CURTIS

FREDERICK DOUGLASS: Selections From His Writings, edited by Philip S. Foner, International Publishers, New York. 95 pp. $.35. 1945.

Great men grow with the years. Often, to those who achieve a pseudo-greatness during their lifetime, the fame lessens and disappears as the years go. Frederick Douglass, slave, freedman, writer, lecturer and thinker, grows in stature as the years pass. The beliefs for which he fought and the words he said and wrote take on added meaning during these times.

It is perhaps impossible not to draw comparisons between the days in which Frederick Douglass lived and those which we know now. Many of his words (quoted) in these selections from his writings, carry an impact for present situations. Many of the problems which faced the Negro before and immediately following the emancipation are with him still. History continues, rather than repeats itself, along the same old lines.

A Workmanlike Job

In such a small volume, it is necessary to take only the essence of all the writing done by a man who wrote voluminously on many things. The editor has done a workmanlike job in his selections. By dividing the excerpts into the years before and during the war, and after the reconstruction, the three great periods in which Douglass fought for right, emerge.

Of importance also in the volume is an introduction which outlines in a few pages the life of Douglass, telling in some detail of the events and people important to his development. Though he is a man revered by the people for whom he fought, many adults and young folks know too little of the really important part he played in the history of our nation. This short biography is an introduction to knowledge of these things.

So strong was the weapon of Douglass' pen that it is difficult to pick from even a small collection of his work the most quotable passages.

Effects of Slavery

In talking of the effects of slavery upon the white worker Douglass pointed up a situation which exists in large measure now. "The slaveholders," he said, "with a craftiness that was peculiar to themselves, by encouraging the enmity of the poor laboring white man against the blacks, succeeded in making the said white man almost as much of a slave as the black slave himself. . . . The white slave had taken from him by indirection what the black slave had taken from him directly and without ceremony. Both were plundered, and by the same plunderers."

Again, Douglass said, "The citizenship granted in the Fourteenth Amendment is practically a mockery, and the right to vote, provided for in the Fifteenth Amendment, is literally stamped out in face of government. The old master class is today triumphant, and the newly enfranchised class in a condition but little above that in which they were found before the rebellion." A look at many of our Southern states makes these words, for the present generation of Negroes still carry the ring of deep truth.

Filled With Powerful Prose

For those who have not read Douglass, this small volume should be a welcome and inexpensive addition to their library. It is filled with the flowing and powerful prose of a man who perhaps gained his greatness because he believed sincerely in the rights of all men, (and their womenfolk as well.) His philosophy can well be summed up from one last quotation from his writings.

"The lesson of all the ages on this point (prejudice) is, that a wrong done to one man is a wrong done to all men. It may not be felt at the moment, and the evil day may be long delayed, but so sure as there is a moral government of the universe, so sure will the harvest of evil come."

Trinidadian does book on racial relationships here

NEW YORK—Negro-white relations from the viewpoint of a foreign-born Negro are discussed in a new book, "Democracy Limited", by Eric L. Hercules, native of Trinidad.

Hercules, engaged in journalism in this country, was educated at McGill university, Canada; Wilberforce university and Oberlin college. His father is a native of Venezuela and a religious educator. His mother was a concert pianist before her marriage, and a brother is studying law in London.

Regarding the Negro's problem in America, Hercules states:

BOOK PUBLISHED—Eric L. Hercules is author of one of the first books to discuss the Negro-white race problem in America from the viewpoint of a foreign Negro. The book was released by the Central Publishing House in Cleveland, Ohio, on Saturday, Feb. 10. Mr. Hercules is a British subject. Said the author of the problem, "While certain features of the problem are capable of being immediately remedied, the Negro race is mistaken in attempting to force issues prematurely."

NEGRO PLAY SONGS

Altona Trent Johns' book, "Play Songs of the Deep South" (The Associated Publishers, Inc., Washington, D. C., $2.15, 33 pages), is a noteworthy effort to popularize the traditional "play songs" which Negro children of the deep South have loved and enjoyed for many generations. These play songs are as much a part of the South as the Negro spirituals. However, as Mrs. Johns points out in the foreword of her book, "Our beautiful and poignant Negro spirituals are well known, but the spirit of play is not so familiar to the general public."

The book contains twelve of these charming little play songs, such as, "Sissy in de Barn," "O Li'l 'Liza Jane," "Chickama, Chickama, Craney-Crow," "Run, Tell Aunt Nancy," etc., and a Negro lullaby entitled "Go to Sleepy, Little Baby." The music is arranged simply and can be played and sung by young pianists or used by teachers of folk dancing as the numbers in the music correspond with the numbers for the dance directions. The beautiful illustrations by James A. Porter make the book all the more interesting.

Probably no one is better qualified than Mrs. Johns to produce a book. She was born in Asheville, N. C., the daughter of William J. Trent, president of Livingstone College, and of Anna Belle Mitchell, a music teacher of Raleigh. She attended the elementary schools of Asheville and then entered Atlanta University where she majored in languages and music. She later studied at the University of Pennsylvania. She has taught at Atlanta University, Bennett College, Virginia Seminary, and now teaches music at the R. R. Moton High School in Farmville. Her experience as a rural teacher and as the housekeeper of a farm home fifteen miles from Farmville afforded her many opportunities to study the life of rural children. She is married to the Rev. Vernon Johns, former head of Virginia Seminary, and is the mother of six children.

EVELYN WIGGINS SHARPE.
DeLand, Fla.

Publish New Book On Fred Douglass

NEW YORK. — (ANP) —The writings and speeches of Frederick Douglass have been selected for a new book, just published by the International publishers. The name of the book which covers the famous abolitionist's pre-civil war and post-civil-war activities, is "Frederick Douglass—Tribune of His People."

According to International publishers, it is being published in connection with Negro History Week in February. Another book soon to be published by the same firm is "Main Epochs in the History of the American Negro."

This book was written by Herbert Apthoker and contains four previously published notable pamphlets by the author, namely "Negro Slave Revolts in the U. S." "The Negro in the American Revolution," "The Negro in the Abolitionist Movement," and "The Negro in the Civil War."

New York Accepts Outlawed Novel

NEW YORK — (CNS)—"It Was Not My World," sensational novel written by Dearick F. Jenkins brilliant young author of Los Angeles, has been accepted by the public library of New York City which sent him a check for a copy last week.

The response of the N. Y. Library was encouraging to Mr. Jenkins whose book has been banned by the public library in Los Angeles evidently considered the book controversial. The novel, published by Mr. Jenkins himself, when white publishing houses refused to accept it because of its treatment of the racial situation in the South, attacks the system of segregation in Dixie, and the it as a whole.

Mr. Jenkins said his book has received wide distribution and that

...ges have bought copies ...braries.

DR. C. J. CHAPMAN

Professor of education and director of athletic publicity at Tennessee State college in Nashville, whose latest book, "The Thorn In The Flesh," has been released for sale by the Hermitage Printing Co., Nashville Publishing firm. The volume, Dr. Chapman's fourth, is a comprehensive study of race relations in the South. He is also author of "A History of Negro Land Grant Colleges."

And it is the story of their efforts to accustom themselves to so-called city life which is told in Edwin Peeples first novel.

Most of the problems typical of such a situation are in this book—difficulties with the white people, the fights and arguments between the negroes themselves, religion and song, and the negro's uncertainty about his position in a society dominated by unfriendly elements.

However, this is not another "Strange Fruit," nor is it a "Native Son." About the best one can say for Mr. Peeples is that he is an adequate reporter and a poor editorialist. Evidently the book is meant to contain a message. The injustice and inequality thrust upon the poor negroes who live in Billiard Hollow is certainly emphasized. But the author seems not yet polished enough in his style to carry off the job which he has undertaken.

The uneven quality of the style is particularly noticeable. Bits of description are like stark and natural paintings, but, for the most part, the dialog and action lack the same reality. Admittedly, any dialog story presents problems to the author. But when they are not overcome the writer has fallen short. Mr. Peeples has given his characters lines which sound as though they belong in a minstrel show or a movie. He was probably sincere in his efforts to reproduce the sound of negro speech, but he has concentrated too much on it.

Yet, despite its faults, "Swing Low" is a warm and fairly human story, and the author has given a report of conditions which do exist.

Macmillan To Otter Odum's New Study

Dr. Howard W. Odum, whose book "The Way Of The South" will be published by Macmillan is the recipient of the Edward L. Bernays award for outstanding achievement in negro-white relations. Mr. Bernays donated the award through the department of race relations of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. Dr. Odum, Kenan professor for research in social science at the University of North Carolina, is well known as an authority on race relations and on the negro.

Migration To City Is Theme Of Novel

Adjustment To Life In Urban Area Studied

SWING LOW. By Edwin A. Peeples. Houghton Mifflin Co. $2.50.

Reviewed by GUY NORTHROP.

Sociologists of late have remarked the growing trend of the negro to move from the country to the city. The romantic allure of the bright lights, and the ever present desire to be among their kind bring negroes in droves to town.

Such a negro was Amy, Willy Mack's wife, who talked him into moving from the farm to Atlanta. When Lucy had insisted on marrying him and was happy for their brief life together, the two families agreed to see little of each other, but it was a mutually self-respecting truce.

Post and Lucy both died young and their daughter Cecilia was brought up as one of the Catholic Warrens, convent-educated. When Cecilia brought home her young man, the two families at last came together. He, too, they agreed was a nice fellow, but his name was Hyman Silverstein. They hastened to add that no one would think him a Jew. They had an out about it, for his mother had been a Gentile. Every one called him Tag, after her name and his middle name, Taget.

But Tag's cousin, who had married a Gentile, put the matter plainly: "Sometimes I think . . . if some folks have buried their racial prejudices, the chances are that they've got the graves marked and will have no trouble disinterring their pet hates."

Miss Lawrence skillfully disinters those hates, in scraps of conversation that Cecilia caught with a new acuteness after she had married Tag, amazed again and again that they had previously passed

Miss Lawrence does not gloss over what it meant to Tag and Cecilia that he was Jewish in their relationships among family, friends, and strangers through their first months of married life, before Tag was shipped overseas. Unacceptable at hotels, rejected by slatternly landladies in post towns, sneered at by flunkeys who had been polite to the rich Miss Warren, treated with restraint by even well intentioned friends, torn by the need to decide whether it would be only fair to children or a betrayal o. children to take Tag's mother's name. (Tag decided it would be a betrayal when Grandmother Warren forced the issue by offering to will Cecilia $200,000 on that condition.) Even the people who should have known from personal experience what prejudice meant were often the first to turn it against others.

The answer—and personally it was sufficient—was the joy of their marriage. But apart from her personal affairs, Cecilia had to find some guide line out of the mess of unreason, rudeness, and worse that she could not ignore. She found comfort in the fact that in the marriage of her parents and Tag's parents, personal happiness and integrity had been attainable. Among incredibly crude

Nice People, But—Prejudiced

LET US CONSIDER ONE ANOTHER.

By Josephine Lawrence. . . . *314 pp. . . . New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. . . . $2.75.*

Reviewed by MARY ROSS

MISS LAWRENCE'S uncanny ability to get under one's skin makes this story of a New England family as effective as it is uncomfortable.

The Ferrises and the Warrens went back to the Revolution. They were thoroughly nice people, as the world reckons, comfortably well off, reasonably well educated, brought up in what goes by the name of good manners. There had been dismay, however, when Lucy Ferris brought Post Warren home to dinner for the first and only time. "He was a right nice young fellow, only he was a Catholic." her by or that she might even have said some of them herself. All Jews are noisy and aggressive and grubby. Italians always beat their wives. The French have no morals. The Irish belong in shanties. Negroes are light-fingered; if they come from the South, they're lazy, and if from the North, overbearing and cocky. The Catholics stick together. And so on down the whole dreary line.

The book projects two thoroughly decent young people who love each other against the background of a family that is not endearing but surely cannot be too far out of the common run. The aunts and uncles who did not hesitate to predict a dire outcome for Cecilia's marriage didn't bother to consider what success they had made of their own personal relationships. When some one pointed with pride to the fact that the family had never had a divorce, Tobias Ferris, the wise old grandfather, remarked, "No one's divorced, I grant you, but that's only because the household Fascists win."

and bigoted people who surrounded her—and no class nor race had a monopoly of those unlovely qualities—were some who could see what became so clear and reasonable to her.

I reverence the courage, the intelligence, the self-sacrifice, and integrity of my ancestors and they lay an obligation on me to develop my character in turn. But those traits are human—not racial. You may find them in a Gentile or a Jew . . . it is so simple and we make it so complicated; each of us will be judged by God as an individual soul. Why do we insist on passing judgments on the mass?

Miss Lawrence puts this question with haunting force because she shows it in terms of people and situations that we meet from day to day. Her gift for catching the significant detail builds up to a picture that rips away the smug acceptance of prejudice among people who like to think themselves well bred and reasonable. "Let Us Consider One Another" is outstanding among the row of vivid books in which Miss Lawrence has courageously attacked one after another of the closeted skeletons in American family and social life. It is also a first-rate story.

Southern Epitome

MEMPHIS BRAGABOUTS. By Eldon Roark. Illustrated. 224 pp. New York: Whittlesey House. $2.50.

MEMPHIS, big, sprawling, easy-going city on the Mississippi River bluffs, about where Tennessee, Arkansas and Mississippi meet, is probably the most typically Southern of all Southern cities. Half white, half Negro, it is the mecca for Mississippi cottton-pickers and Mississippi plantation owners, for Arkansas share-croppers and Arkansas ladies come to shop, for all the folk of the scattered towns, hamlets and farms of west Tennessee.

Eldon Roark, Memphis newspaper man, has looked around him at the miscellaneous characters wandering in and out of Memphis or just living there, selected the most interesting, unusual, or grotesque, and made a book about them. It is a book of humorous, lightweight sketches concerning such diverse characters as a professional chicken-thief, a weather prophet, a bull-lifter, a woodpecker-expert, and the owners of an eighteen-year-old goose, a twenty-five-year-old rooster and a two-headed turtle. There are stories, too, on such better-known characters as W. C. Handy and Casey Jones, on Beale Street, and on some of the quainter aspects of Southern white etiquette, which permits, for example, a Negro to be called Reverend, Doctor, Professor, Uncle or Aunt, but never Mr. or Mrs.

Best of all was the story of the Arkansas A. and M. football team which played for the sport of it, with a coach who only took the job when the school promised not to expect any games to be won. Now, *that* is really a "bragabout!"

N. K. B.

The Colorful Pageant of Plantation Life in Louisiana

PLANTATION PARADE. By Harnett T. Kane. Illustrated with Photographs. 342 pp. New York: William Morrow & Co. $3.50.

New York Times
12-23-45

By JOHN GOULD FLETCHER

ALTHOUGH the region known as the United States is fundamentally democratic, yet several areas of it were first settled by aristocrats whose culture was strong enough and long-lasting enough to influence late-comers. If we omit the ship-captain towns of New England, the Beacon Hill dwellers of Boston, the remnants of the Dutch patroons along the Upper Hudson, all the really aristocratic settlements were in the South — in Virginia, around Charleston or Savannah, centering upon Natchez, or—last but not least—in Louisiana. Among these areas the Louisiana region stands out, because of its great wealth and the fact that its qualities were not unsuccessfully transmitted from its founders to was worthless. Fortunately, the Spaniards did not actually take possession till four years afterward; and then only with a small force that wisely left the Creoles and their institutions intact. They survived thus largely unchanged, growing in power and prosperity till the War of 1812-14; the last battle of which was fought by a Tennessee frontiersman over the possession of the town of New Orleans.

It is necessary to know something of this historical background before we can appreciate the quality of Mr. Kane's book. What he has done is, essentially, to write a series of biographies of some of Louisiana's most famous families; it is not to his discredit as a writer that he has stressed the most picturesque and dramatic details that he can find concerning his planters. The scope of his book, describing the plantation homes that still exist, as well as those that are known lasting. Louisiana provided a soil of unexampled fertility—whenever the swamp would be drained, the floods checked, the forests cut away—and but little else.

The culture which the French brought with them was marvelously adapted to the long, lazy, languid summers—so good for ripening cane and cotton—the brief but complete intermittencies of the winter climate. It was founded on a type of plantation economy which could only flourish under paternalism; on loyalty to family tradition and the rule of one's elders to the utmost; on a passion for good food, good clothes and music; along with a daredevil tendency to gambling, dissipation and dueling; and a fabulous quality of hospitality displayed to all strangers. All these tendencies, good and bad, made Louisiana what it was—and still largely is.

Indigo, as Mr. Kane points points out, brought the second great wave of prosperity to the Louisiana region—already become a part of the United States. In March, 1811, the first voyage from Pittsburgh to New Orleans took place—a voyage that coincided with the New Madrid earthquake, the greatest convulsion of nature the lower valley has ever known. From that time on, till well past the Civil War, the steamboat made of Louisiana a close-knit society, with convenient access up and down bayous and rivers. N-4. N-4.

However, as Mr. Kane also notes in his opening chapters, the older families had already displayed, under prosperity, a distressing tendency to run out, not to propagate male heirs. In the tragic history of the Aimes, and their last and greatest Valcour, this tendency is manifest. (Whether it has displayed itself elsewhere in America would be an interesting question.) Valcour Aime, after becoming one of the greatest landowners, but before rebuilding his ample plantation home into a great showplace, had fathered four daughters and but one son. The son was spoilt, of course, as his father became more and more wealthy and important. And at twenty-eight, after a life spent mostly in Paris, he died unwed of the prevailing yellow fever.

THE death started the complete decline of the family—and in 1867, with Valcour's own death at seventy, the place, famous in its day, was soon completely abandoned by the remainder of the clan. Mr. Kane surpasses his usual style in the description he gives of its present state—house and church and family graveyard given to the river, the rest gone back to the jungle. This pattern was not singular to the Aimes. It repeated itself in the lives of other planters, Creole and American. In every case there have been a period of pioneer effort, an age of grandeur, a long fading out into decay.

Little of the material splendor of that time remains today, although some of it may be found in the many antique shops of New Orleans. Few even of the homes themselves — built uniformly in a Louisiana adaptation of the Greek Revival style from 1820 onward—remain except in decay, as Mr. Kane's descriptions and the photographs show. Yet the Anglo-Saxon who came to settle in Louisiana carried on the established French tradition; indeed, as Mr. Kane points out, the two largest and most palatial houses were built by rival settlers from Virginia, just before the Civil War. The Louisiana economy of vast acreages (one planter boasted of seeing 6,000 from his roof) could not continue after 1865. Even at its best, the failure of two cotton or cane crops, usually spelled ruin — so vast were the establishments of helpers the system required.

YET, in a sense, though the life detailed in this book remains only a matter of sentimental curiosity, nothing essential is really lost. Louisiana may boast that she lived by a standard (envied by upriver planters who took annual steamboat trips to share it) which was not only opulent, but firm. Mr. Kane has met and spoken with the descendants of many famous planters. These, though invariably living in poverty today, accept their lot with no littleness of spirit. They repine little because of what they have lost. They can lose as gracefully as their ancestors ever won. The same attitude may be found in other parts of the South, wherever the older society made and left its mark. It is certainly clear from New Orleans to Baton Rouge, and as far as St. Francisville, as I can testify.

The only misfortune these survivors of a lost society have to face is that they can find little worth striving for in the raucous bustle of today. They remain helplessly attached to the past, not feeling that they can find salvation in applied science, or in the proletarian revolution, or in a religion without roots, or in the writings of Dr. Freud.

11-1945

BOOKS, PAMPHLETS, MAGAZINES

THE NEGRO IN THE ARMED FORCES

Seymour Schoenfeld, Lieutenant Commander, U. S. N. R., has used the story of the military history of the Negro in the armed forces as a backdrop for making pertinent suggestions whereby the potential value of the Negro soldier may be more fully realized.

After citing instances of the creditable participation of the Negro in the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Civil and Spanish American Wars and World Wars I and II, the author states that "The wars of the United States prove the falsity of certain stereotyped prejudices such as: The Negro is not amenable to discipline, he is a coward; Negroes and whites cannot be successfully employed in mixed units; Negro troops must be commanded by white officers; Negroes are not suited by temperament to make good sailors; Negro officers cannot command the respect of their own race; Negroes are unable to make good combat soldiers; Negroes have not the ability to learn the technical art and science of war."

Perhaps more important than the historical background of the Negro's military activities is the discussion of the socio-economic factors affecting the lives of Negro Americans. The Negro, the author says, is the most economically depressed, is shunted into crowded areas, has poorer provisions for education, is discriminated against in the courts, and has been disfranchised in many states of the country.

Schoenfeld recommends the use of selected mixed units, colored M. P.'s and S. P.'s for colored troops, stationing Negroes outside the South, and making towns where prejudice against soldiers runs high "off limits" for military personnel. All of these measures should be but a prelude to full integration of the Negro, the author suggests.

Secretary of Commerce Henry A. Wallace wrote a cover recommendation for the book, Evans Fordyce Carlson, Colonel, United States Marine Corps, who wrote the foreword says " . . . race prejudice can be obliterated by reason and understanding." The Negro in the Armed Forces —His Value and Status—Past, Present, and Potential, Washington, D. C., The Associated Publishers. $1.10.

Should Negroes Have Equal Rights?

The American Magazine for July 6 carries a report of a poll of experts in race relations on the question: "Should Negroes Have Equal Rights?" Dr. Arthur Kornhauser, Bureau of Applied Social Research, Columbia university, who conducted the poll, reports that 99 per cent of the experts say that they put no stock in the old dodge that Negroes are natively inferior to whites and 93 per cent say that prejudice is not inborn.

The apparent inferiority of the Negro, some of the polees said, is due to the fact that Negroes are segregated in slum areas, are barred from many occupations, attend miserably financed separate schools and are forced to adopt a subservient attitude in the presence of whites.

Among the recommendations which the experts made for the improvement of race relations are these: Better publicity of the Negro's participation in the war, educational programs in the country's industries making it possible for Negroes and whites to know each other better by working together, the offering of courses in tolerance in our public schools, and the elimination from movies, magazines, newspapers and radio programs of stereotypes portrayals of childlike characterizations of the Negro.

The polees suggest that the Negro would do well to move out of impoverished areas in the South to farming areas in the North and West.

A list of the persons whose opinions were represented in the poll contains such names as Edwin R. Embree, Charles H. Houston, Howard W. Odum, R. J. Thomas, Goodwin Watson and many others of similar rank.

We commend the article to our readers.

"A Conscience is a Heavy Thing"

A reprint of Lillian Smith's "The White Christian and His Conscience" reached our desk today, and lest we forget— you can get a copy of it for ten cents by writing South Today, Clayton, Georgia. Miss Smith again comes straight down the line pointing out the conflicts which arise in a person's bosom when he makes an effort to subscribe to widely varying principles at the same time. "The white man in America was willing neither to give up Jesus nor to give up the slave; neither democracy nor white supremacy; neither his conscience nor his way of life. As a result, she says, strange things are being done to our culture, our personalities and our children.

The author charges the white Christian to look at himself in the mirror of Christ's teachings, and to see himself reflected there, to learn that he is just a plain human instead of a semi-god, and to regard the feeling of superiority as a warning that there is something wrong with his emotional health.

The Negro, she says, must help find a way to dump the hate, despair and loss of faith, which he has as a result of social shunning, discrimination and mistreatment. The white man must meet the Negro half way, but the Negro must not turn away in suspicion when the white reaches out a friendly hand, the author says.

E. W. Stewart.

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Cir. S. 65,063

JUL 8-19

Charmingly Unboastful, This Book On the West

Haystead's 'If the Prospect Pleases: The West the Guidebooks Never Mention' Discusses Region's Postwar Prospects With Novel Restraint, Realism

"If the Prospect Pleases: The West the Guidebooks Never Mention," by Ladd Haystead (University of Oklahoma Press; $2.50) is a most unusual book to come out of America's 'teen-aged states. For years now we have been buffeted with assurances that the West is a land where every prospect pleases, where men are men, and where opportunities are endless. For the most part we have believed these things, have been somewhat in awe of our energetic neighbors and have constantly advised "Go west, young man." But here is a book that soft pedals instead of lyricizes, that coaxes instead of demands, and that —of all things—gently hints that perhaps the West has a regional inferiority complex!

Something certainly must have happened out in them thar mountains, and happened in spite of the fact that Henry Kaiser seems to be building all our ships and Texans flying all our planes. Mr Haystead thinks that what has happened is that the West has suddenly come of age and is now ready for long pants. "The West of song and story . . . and neon-promotion brochures, is gone. It started to wither in the dust bowl days. Silently and unnoticed it passed away entirely during the riotous war days. As soon as the V-day hangover is stared down, the West must face the unpleasant fact that it can no longer get away with 'youth' as an excuse—the prodigal son of the other parts of the economy."

Mr Haystead's opinion obviously is not that of the average westerner, for due to his job as farm editor of Fortune magazine he has been in a position to see the West through eastern as well as western eyes. He is a westerner himself, is proud of it, and maintains a home in New Mexico as well as in New York. It seems possible that he has taken too eastern a view of the outlook for the West, and has not gone deeply enough into the economic and social factors involved, but his analysis is most certainly a challenge to the West and of more than passing interest to the East—which isn't feeling too robust itself these days.

Hr Haystead feels in the first place that "We of the West have oversold our area. We have failed to take into account the limitations of eastern experience. More, we have not taken the trouble to analyze the components of our market." So in an interesting, rather conversational, way, he offers his opinions on what the West can offer in a variety of opportunities—industry, cattle, farming, lumber, oil and the tourist business, which he thinks may outstrip them all as far as chances for modest investments are concerned.

He also rounds up a few views on the cultural and social aspects of life in the West, straying too far from base in suggesting that the West has a purer brand of democracy than the East—except for the Nisei, who might as well understand that Pearl Harbor ended their chances. There are also, it seems, a few other exceptions, such as Mexicans (the "most abused racial group"), Negroes ("more than likely they will tend to crowd into black belts and shanty towns"), and the Chinese (they are highly thought of as ranch cooks). But he is right in telling the West that this is really one country now, and he is possibly also right in suggesting "that philosophies are not so tired beyond the hundreth meridian."

R. F. H.

Rosenwald Issues Race Relations Directory

The Afro American
Baltimore Md

CHICAGO—With a view to giving an over-all picture of the forces in this country working for unity, democracy and understanding, the Julius Rosenwald Fund has issued a "Directory of Agencies in Race Relations."

This 124-page book contains a list of 340 organizations and gives the purpose, activities, and personnel of 268, of which 120 are national or regional agencies.

33 Groups in 24 States

Twenty-four States, 11 in the South, have 33 groups working for interracial unity, while 177 are located in various cities throughout the country.

Not included among local organizations, according to Dr. Charles S. Johnson, race relations director for the fund, are local branches of national organizations of sub-committees on race relations of local organizations whose main purpose covers a large field.

The complete list includes labor, educational, religious, social welfare, professional and philanthropic agencies, as well as those groups representing such minorities as colored Americans, Jews, Indians, Japanese-Americans and Latin-Americans.

Pointing out that many little groups in widely separated communities are struggling to find answers to almost identical problems, Dr. Johnson says he hopes the book will serve to "stimulate a fruitful interchange of ideas, programs and persons."

Pamphlet Urges New Day for Africa

["What Do the People of Africa Want?" By Mrs. Paul Robeson. A pamphlet published by Council on African Affairs, Inc.]

By AMY ASHWOOD GARVEY

AMY ASHWOOD GARVEY

WITH two world wars ostensibly fought (1) to make the world safe for democracy, (2) to ensure freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, freedom from fear, it should hardly be necessary to state a case for 150 million people living in nearby twelve million square miles. Yet with the "democratic lag" being what it is, there is undoubtedly stark need for the restatement of old truths with the intensity that the self-evident paradoxically demands.

In *What Do the People of Africa Want*, Mrs. Paul Robeson, the wife of the people's artist has restated an old truth, now chronic with neglect. Mrs. Robeson, a personality in her own right, brings a moving breath of freshness to her case. *What Do the People of Africa Want* thus turns out to demand a high place in the field of pamphleteering.

The pamphlet is informative, engaging and poetic in stating its case for these "so-called black savages." Mrs. Robeson's approach to her subject is realistic. She scorns the academic approach which has made so much of the best-intentioned literature about Africa in the past into insignificance.

Answers Old Question

She poses the question: *"Can we today, intelligent people living in a realistic world afford to ignore or be ignorant about Africa?"* And she answers herself adequately: *"Such a question is academic now. Circumstances are taking charge of us."* It is heartening to have an American—and an American Negro woman at that—showing such precise, pragmatic awareness of a condition which began with the Middle Passage but surely did not end there. Mrs. Robeson could well afford to "imprison" her vision in this huge fortress of free enterprise and pursuit of happiness for all. But she knows that second-class citizenship "with equal facilities" is not unrelated to the feudal state of things in political Africa. She also knows that it is no sheer accident that there is equal ardour to frolic with the thought of keeping the Negro "in his place" both in America where he is a 1-10 shot and in South Africa where he represents eight million Africans to two million Europeans. Mrs. Robeson emphasizes the global technique of oppression and makes her story effective by proving historically the African's capacity for self-government.

Gold From Africa

On the economic side she convinces us that if there is a prudish, global pretense that "nobody but Jesus" knows what the African people want, the partners in Africa exploitation share no doubts about their own desires. She tells for example that:

- Four hundred million ounces of gold, about one-half of the world, comes from Africa. About one-half of the essential alloys used in making steel come from Africa. Cotton, palm oil, cocoa, rubber and the all-precious radium are also mentioned among the "dark continent's" virgin gifts to the imperial rapists.

Illuminating the entire pamphlet are some "signs of a new day in Africa." The technological advances are pronounced and it is encouraging to see that culturally the African people are not out of step with the industrial world.

The appeal of the pamphlet depends largely on the story of the struggle it tells. And this is skillfully done. However, in presenting the key question: *What Do the African People Want*, Mrs. Robeson is not as superbly vocal as a Robeson is capable of being. Where we expect a vibrant song of freedom, she gives us ol' man river, albeit with modern overtones, but still ol' man river. . . .

Foreword by Yergan

Her theme now rolls along rather than stirs; it pleads rather than provokes; it asserts rather than agitates. It ought to be sufficient to say boldly that the African people want what other people want. This is a statement of fact and faith. However, what other oppressed people want they fight and die for and Africans at home and abroad must let the battle-cry ring with fear.

All in all, Mrs. Robeson endears herself to us as an advocate and her pamphlet-appeal is enhanced by a crisply worded foreword by Max Yergan and a map of Africa that should make a lot of people of African descent Africa-minded. *What Do the People of Africa Want* is must reading for all progressive people who believe in a people's world and a people's peace.

[Amy Ashwood Garvey is the first wife of the late Marcus Garvey and was his chief aide in the formation of the movement which bore his name. Recently she has been actively interested in social and political affairs of the West Indies, especially of her native Jamaica].

JOHN BEECHER'S BOOK, "ALL BRAVE SAILORS", TO BE PUBLISHED AUGUST 1st.

New York Age 7-14-45

Announcement was made this week by the Fischer Publishing Company, that John Beecher's forthcoming new book, "All Brave Sailors", the story of the SS Broker T. Washington will be published August 1st.

According to the pubishers, John Beecher, great-grandnephew of Harriet Beecher Stowe, adds a new chapter to his family's tradition of militant democracy in his chronicle of the SS Booker T. Washington's War service. Shortly after Pearl Harbor, he signed on as an offcer under the ship's Negro Captain. For two years, he has served in the battle of supply to the invasion ports, as one of the SS Booker T. Washingtons mixed crew, eating, sleeping, working and going ashore alongside his black, yellow, brown and white shipmates.

Out of this unique experience comes ALL BRAVE SAILORS. It describes the diverse personalities that made up this extraordinary ship community, how each member shared in the common effort to prove American racial solidarity in defeating Hitlerism and how it welded men from many walks of life and classes into a cooperative unit to make a reality of an idea that has often been discussed as Utopian.

All-Negro Professional And Business Guide Ready

The second edition of the "Stucker Business and Professional Directory" will be off the press next week, according to an announcement by Henry T. Stucker, publisher, Stucker's Publishing Co., Ltd., 456 Manhattan Ave.

The latest issue of the directory, Mr. Stucker informs, extends beyond the limits of the previous edition. In addition to covering the five boroughs and Westchester, the new venture takes in the entire State and the shore resorts of New Jersey.

In brief, the "Stucker Business and Professional Directory" is a comprehensive guide to all Negro businesses and professional workers. That is, only Negroes are listed.—S. W. G.

11-1945 Bibliography

Problems of Minorities

Richmond Times Dispatch Va.

ONE NATION, by Wallace Stegner and the editors of Look Magazine. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 340 pp. $3.75.

9-30-45

Reviewed by
Betty Sessler

BY eye-opening pictures and writing which spares no punches, Wallace Stegner has told the story of the minorities in a "free" United States—the Negro and Jew and Catholic, the Chinese, Japanese, Filipino and Mexican, the Indian.

Not only does the author point out inferior conditions which confront the minorities but he shows the ways in which the situations can be overcome. "When segregation lasts over any length of time, and extends through many areas of experience like education, housing and so on," he says, "it tends to create in the 'inferior' race not only an attitude of inferiority but a mass of observable characteristics — poverty, disease, ignorance, perhaps compensatory 'pushiness' or 'uppityness'—which then reinforce the first prejudice."

Mr. Stegner points out that what he calls "cumulative causation" can be worked for good as well as ill. Rural Negroes, for instance, who are considered ignorant should be given good schools, he says, and within half a generation thousands of young Negroes will have changed for the better. 9-30-45

In the United States, the book explains, there are 13,000,000 Negroes, 22,000,000 Catholics, 4,500,000 Jews, 3,500,000 Mexicans, 377,000 American Indians, 127,000 Japanese, 77,000 Chinese, 45,000 Filipinos, 2,400 Hindus, and 1,700 Koreans—a third of the citizens of the nation.

The largest single portion of the book is devoted to the Negro problem—pictures of the Negro faced with Jim Crow law, the Negro is unskilled labor, in disease, in squalor, the Negro lynched. Then there are more pictures of the Negro as college graduate, as musician and dancer and scientist, as soldier and sailor. The slums give way to planned settlements where the Negro, side-by-side with the whites, lives in modern apartments and has food and playgrounds.

"Little by little, educated and economically secure," Mr. Stegner writes, "Negroes break their way out of the black ghettos into light and air."

What is the Jew? Mr. Stegner asks, and replies that his is a religion, not a race. "More mixed in their blood than even Americans, Jews may be anything from Negro to blood and blue-eyed may be round-headed or long-headed, hook-nosed or flat nosed, thick slipped or thin-lipped. . . . There are Chinese Jews, Polish, Russian, Romanian, Lettish, English, Portuguese, German, Spanish Jews, and they all tend to resemble the people among whom they have lived." 9-30-45

Wallace Stegner, author of 'One Nation,' a Life-in-America book, written in collaboration with the editors of 'Look' Magazine.

The average Catholic has no desire for a church of politics, the book continues, explaining the causes behind the charges against Catholics. A lively picture of nuns playing croquet shows that they give up neither humanity nor laughter." The church for centuries has been a defender and preserver of learning," Mr. Stegner asserts.

The other minorities are less familiar to Southeasterners, but their problems are the same. Restricted signs, prejudice, beatings and riots, taunts, lack of opportunity in jobs and education, poverty.

This is a book for every American who believes in democracy—a book for the Joneses and the Smiths. It's all there is plain, everyday language that no one can fail to understand—and if the reading takes too much time, the pictures tell the story.

The book is what our soldiers were fighting for—our Jewish and Catholic and Negro soldiers, the Chinese-Americans and the Filipinos. "One nation, indisvisible with liberty and justice for all."

About Books

By CONSTANCE CURTIS

New York Amsterdam News

JOHN HENRY AND THE DOUBLE-JOINTED STEAM DRILL, By Irwin Shapiro. Illustrated. Julian Messner. New York. 1945. $1.50.

New York New York 10-6-45

John Henry's strength as a "natural man" is not one bit more than his ability to be remembered in the folk lore of the nation. The big man, whose face was the color of ten dollar black shoes, is off again, this time in a charming story by Irwin Shapiro, who does him real justice.

John Henry and the Double-Jointed Steam Drill gives a new twist to the old story that John met his end, "with his hammer in his hand," trying to outwork a steam drill. Mr. Shapiro says that no such thing happened. John beat the steam drill even if it did wear him down a little, and still he came back for more.

"I just threw me a faint," said John Henry.

"Mighty powerful faint," said Pollie Ann.

"I'm a mighty powerful man," said John Henry. "And when I faint, I don't faint puny."

For Good Relations

Both in text, and in powerful illustrations done by James Daugherty, John Henry is a book that may well be used to aid in cementing interracial understanding among young people. Designed for all nine years and older, it gives a place to the black folk-hero along with white Paul Bunyan.

Fears as to dialect teaching young folk new tricks in mutilating the English language won't hold with this tale, either. Rather than a labored dialect, Mr. Shapiro shows a keen ear for the cadences of language, without the twisted spellings and too often used "lawd a mercies." There's a swing to the way John Henry and Pollie Ann talk that has a great deal of the dialect flavor without the drawbacks of being hard to understand.

Any discussion of the way in which Mr. Shapiro works out the explanation of the false report of John Henry's death would be giving away a good story. It does work itself out well, however, and in doing so carries a little of a lesson for the present and future along with it.

For Singing Too 10-6-45

In a volume that has so many good points, it may be unnecessary to mention yet another, but the fact that many of the songs John sings can be set to the music of "Water Boy" is no drawback. If the recital of verse learned in reading is a pleasure to young and old, alike, so too is the ability to sing new words to old songs. When John sings we sing too:

There ain't no hammer—clong!
Upon this mountain—clang!
Ring like mine, boys—bong!
Ring like mine—whang!
This ol' hammer—bom
Ring like silver—bam!
Shine like gold, boys—whom!
Shine like gold—wham!

PORTRAIT OF A BOY IN AFRICA, By Mbonu Ojike. Published by the East and West Association as a condensation of the book My Africa to be published by John Day, New York. 1945. 36 pp. $.40.

The New York Amsterdam News

Life in a Nigerian village during and after the first World War emerges clearly as Mbonu Ojike talks of his childhood and his struggle to learn some of the things which Western civilization had to offer. The culture of his people, which he has again learned to respect, lost much as he went to schools where only things Western were good, and the teachings of his fathers "quaint" and "heathen." New York

Much that Ojike has to say finds its parallel in the stories of struggle written by Americans and even Englishmen who were born out of the class-where education is a must. Beyond that sameness however, is the added struggle for him of learning of a new culture and then having to return to find those important things that he had lost in the old African way—which he now realizes had many important qualities.

The underlying tragedy of the African scholar is the tragedy of all who are suppressed. The history of the heroes of Europe was more easily available to him than the stories of brave men of his own race. The proven importance of the African way of life was taken from him in his struggle to learn of the lives of other peoples. 11-24-45

PORTRAIT OF A BOY IN AFRICA is more than the remembrance of the childhood of Ojike. In the booklet also is the foundation of the struggle for integrity that is one of the first things taken from a conquered people.

Ojike speaks even in his boyhood, for the new Africa, which will be a blending of two cultures, rather than the shucking off of the African way as though it had no value. He will accept much that the white man has to offer, but he has not forgotten that his people are among the world's great also.

Books of the Times

New York Times

By CHARLES POORE

New York, N. Y.

IN this book, "The U. S. Marines on Iwo Jima,"* there are no fictitious characters: these are stories about Americans, some living, many dead, and their adventures on a far-off Pacific island. It is an official record, but it has more truth and humor and sorrow and valor in it than many new novels you might read this year.

Corp. Lou Boone, from Birmingham, was a rugged individualist. He had fought at Bougainville, and he liked to tie a thirty-foot rope to mines and drag them. If they didn't blow up after the first few feet, he hauled them to the isolation of his private dump. Pfc. Leo Jez of Chicago was advancing on a pillbox when a Japanese officer came out swinging a sword. Private Jez caught the sword and chopped off the head of the Japanese officer, who must have been more surprised than pleased.

A sergeant in one of the LC's was disgruntled. It was the damndest day, he said, he had ever spent: "I'm miserable,, sleepy, cold, sick and scared. All I need is rain." Then it rained. Floyd L. Garrett, pharmacists mate second class, found a marine whose jugular had been cut. The hole was too small for the corpsman to apply a hemostat to the vein, so he slit the man's throat, applied the hemostat, and saved his life. Near Suribachi a radio operator whose foot was hanging on by a shred of flesh, kept the one radio on that beach going until he passed out from loss of blood.

When an officer, briefing his men before the landing, said that a 16-inch shell weighed about as much as a passenger car, and then told how many 16-inch shells would be fired, a young marine private said: "That's an awful lot of Buicks to have coming at you."

Negroes Brought in the Guns

Negroes of the Army's Duck driving outfit brought in the guns. Negro Marine Ordnance crews handled the ammunition. Pfc. Charles B. Black and Pvt. Maurice B. Paris, both from Washington, D. C., steered their amphibious trucks through the hell-on-water that was D-Day. Mortars made fountains of the sea around them. They tried to repair a stalled car full of ammunition under shellfire, and when it still wouldn't work they got another and went on with the job.

The men who raised the flag on Iwo Jima were picked off one by one. Sgt. Ernest R. Thomas who raised the first one was shot through the head as he was telephoning his command post. Sgt. Henry O. Hansen died going forward, and so did Sgt. Mike Strank. Pfc. Franklin R. Sousley died later in the campaign's mopping-up phase. Are any of the six immortalized in Joe Rosenthal's photograph, and all the statues based on it, left?

10-4-45

A bald, peppery marine lieutenant-colonel named Charles Shepard, from Minnesota, told his outfit they had a twofold mission: "One, to secure this lousy piece of real estate so we can get the hell off it. Two, to help as many Nips as possible fulfill their oath to die for the Emperor." In a landing boat, a freckle-faced lieutenant said it was a pity we couldn't "settle these real estate squabbles by legal means." And General Schmidt, ocmmanding the V Amphibious Corps—which included the Marines' Third, Fourth and Fifth Divisions—said: "Heretofore it has always been our policy to grab the monkey by the tail and hang on. Now we're cutting the monkey's tail off."

*THE U. S. MARINES ON IWO JIMA. By Tech. Sgt. Alvin M. Josephy Jr., Tech. Sgt. David K. Dempsey, Tech. Sgt. W. Keyes Beach, First Lieut. Jim G. Lucas, Capt. Raymond Henri. Drawings by Corp. Tom Dunn, USMC. 294 pages. Dial. $3.50.

Three Marine Corps combat correspondents and two Marine Corps public relations officers wrote this book. They were all at Iwo Jima, and they used material gathered under fire by other combat correspondents and PRO's as well. They've done an excellent job, giving the full tactical sweep of the story, and a thousand and one individual details. Photographs, maps and sketches complement their work. At the end there is an honor roll of the dead and missing marines of Iwo Jima.

More Than 20,000 Casualties

Sixty thousands marines landed on Iwo Jima, a miserable volcanic island eight or ten miles square, depending on whose figures you use. More than 20,000 marines were killed or wounded before it was captured. We had to have Iwo to get into the enemy's inner defense line, and the enemy knew we had to have it, and prepared and fought accordingly. At that time Iwo was about the most heavily fortified and intricately defended island in the world.

The Army Air Forces bombed the island for seventy-two days in a row before the landing on Feb. 19 of last year, and the Navy sent its planes and battlewagons against it over and over again. But a story in THE NEW YORK TIMES, filed right after the marines landed, said: "Iwo, a small island, has stood up under bombings and shellings as though it were fifty times its size. Time after time, after smashing attacks on Iwo, American planes would come back the next day to be greeted not only by anti-aircraft but by fighter planes in the air." You may wonder what a couple of dozen atomic bombs would have done to Iwo if they'd been ready on time. But it would probably be as useful to wonder what atomic bombs would have done if they'd been introduced at Waterloo or Cannae.

Men wondered, before D-Day, why aerial photographs showed few signs of bivouac areas or barracks. The costly twenty-six days of fighting gave the answer: the Japs had moved everything underground, in amazing series of connecting tunnels and installations, and they had to be pried and blasted and burned out. How that was done, and at what cost in American lives, is the story of this book. Once we had Iwo, we were in far more effective range of Japan's home islands. In the first three months after Iwo was captured, about 850 B-29's were saved by emergency landings there, and with them some 9,000 members of their crews.

10-4-45

What we lost in taking Iwo is incalculable. As Lieut. Roland B. Gittelsohn, a Navy chaplain from New York said at the Fifth Division's memorial service:

"Here before us lie the bodies of comrades and friends. Men who until yesterday or last week laughed with us, joked with us, trained with us. Men who were on the same ships with us, and went over the sides with us as we prepared to hit the beaches of this island. Men who fought with us and feared with us. Somewhere in this plot of ground there may lie the man who could have discovered the cure for cancer. Under one of these Christian crosses, or beneath a Jewish Star of David, there may rest now a man who was destined to be a great prophet—to find the way, perhaps, for all to live in plenty, with poverty and hardship for none."

The Pittsburgh Courier

Pacific Natives' Future

The brown-and-dark skinned peoples brought into national focus by war and by Felix M. Keesing's "Native Peoples of the Pacific World" (The MacMillan Company, New York, $3), number around one hundred million persons. Islands on which they live are broken up into twenty-six separate units and are under control of nine different nations, including the United States, Great Britain, France and Japan.

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

The natives live close to the ocean and to the soil. They have their languages, religions, art and drama, forms of sport and entertainment, which, though strange to us, serve them satisfactorily. Their code of morals is unique, but the peoples are not without tradition and culture.

They have long been in contact with white men. The western record in the islands is not a creditable one; the white man is not well loved among the islanders, and the peoples are not "dumb" enough to believe he has too much to offer them.

10-6-45

Keesing, who is professor of anthropology at Stanford University, has created a world of speculation as to what will become of these peoples (they wonder the same thing); they are another mass color-problem to be solved. Controlling countries must realize they are human beings, capable of development and adaptation, who should be given time and opportunity to make creative contribution to our world community.

Let us hope that in preaching democracy to the "natives," the controlling countries make it a thing for all, a thing worth having been fought for, and, above that, prove to the Pacific world democracy is not taboo.

GWENDOLYN WILLIAMS
Indianapolis, Ind.

Negro Author Predicts Crisis

Birmingham News

BY W. G. ROGERS
Associated Press Arts Editor

NEW YORK, Nov. 13 — (AP) — "When you run across Negroes and whites working together on the same job, everything looks all right, their relations appear to be satisfactory, but," says Chester B. Himes, "they aren't."

Today's young Negro, says the author of "If He Hollers Let Him Go" (Doubleday, Doran), carries with him all the time the withering consciousness of an inferior social and economic condition. The young man back from war, the youth in the defense industry and the young woman share, the novelist is convinced, the bitter, desperate and uncompromising attitude of his hero, Bob Jones, who worked in a shipyard and hated it.

Himes, too, worked in a shipyard on the West Coast. A calm, shy, modest young Negro with a pleasant, mild voice, a head closely cropped, a gentle air, he does not look as though there burned in him the sort of fury which characterizes Bob Jones.

11-13-45

Himes' hero acts on his convictions, and so loses his girl and his job. Himes appreciates that to follow a counsel of desperation may be to accomplish nothing. But most young Negroes, he believes, have reached the point where they will not endure any longer what they now endure. Rather than say nothing and do nothing, they would lose all.

Born in Missouri, his father a school teacher, Himes now lives in Brooklyn, and is married. He used to write stories about white people for white magazines, about Negroes for Negro magazines. His short stories have appeared in two anthologies. He's working on a second novel.

AMERICAN VIEWPOINT

The Chicago Defender

Bucklin Moon, 'Lighter Brother'

Chicago, Illinois 9-29-45

9-29-45

NEW YORK—A few weeks ago I received a letter from Deotis Hardeman, an Indianapolis reader, who said she was gratified at reading stories of white allies of the Negro. It was with this reader, and others like her, especially in mind, that I sought out Bucklin Moon, one of the ever-widening circle of staunch friends of the Negro.

Bucklin Moon, a big fellow, with a wide, frank face, who is in his early thirties, is the author of "The Darker Brother," a fine novel of Negro life and of "Primer for White Folks," which has just appeared and is doing very well. He is also an associate editor of Doubleday, the New York publisher.

I remember the first time I talked with Moon, perhaps two years ago, soon after "The Darker Brother was issued. I was curious to know whether the writer intended continuing with the Negro theme or whether his first book just happened to be about Negroes, and that there his interest might end.

"Most certainly I expect to go on with the Negro theme," he answered. "My next book, an anthology, will deal directly with this question."

That anthology has now made its appearance—"Primer for White Folks"—and it has been received well and reviewed as well as Moon's first sensitive novel.

Moon well realizes that if a change is to come in the Negro-white situation, it is the white man who must be re-educated. That is why he gave his newest book its simple but masterly title—'Primer for White Folks"—a title which indicates the bankruptcy of the American mind, the poverty of Uncle Sam's thinking on this question.

"There are a great many white people who feel sympathetic toward Negroes but know nothing about them," said Moon, speaking to me in his book-lined apartment on Washington Heights. "Perhaps they have never met one or talked to one. Then some person comes along who is anti-Negro. He talks about his side with great authority—and a good many of our potential friends have nothing to talk back with. 'Primer for White Folks,' is ammunition. It is intended to give the background of the whole question for the interested white."

Kim, the biege and dark brown Siamese cat with blue eyes, was perched on a nearby chair eyeing me shrewdedly as Moon talked. I noticed a kid's "walker"—Moon has two little girls—and doll seated neatly on a sofa. "Kim keeps me company at night when I work," said Moon, who relaxed in a chair opposite me. The author was dressed in brown, and he wore white and tan shoes. His brown shirt was tieless, and open at the collar.

Rosenwald Fellow

Moon recently won a Julius Rosenwald Fellowship to do a new novel. He writes at home several days each week and goes to his office a few days. "How far along are you in the new work?" I asked.

"I've got about four chapters done," he said, and then described the new novel.

The novel, which has no name as yet, will attempt to "see all sides of the Negro."

"There have been many proletarian novels about the Negro working class, but very little has been published which attempts to describe the other sides as well—the middle class, the professional class, and others. What I'm trying to do is take a small town in the South near a big city, start in about 1940, and show the effects of the war on both Negroes and whites. There'll be white and Negro characters.

A Negro college in the story will show that side of Negro life, too. I think it will be a bigger book than 'The Darker Brother,' and I intend to show the conflicts in the Negro group itself. For example I'll deal with the differences between those who advocate immediate or gradual struggle for racial equality."

CIO in South

The story will also tell what effect the Congress of Industrial Organizations has had in the South, and will delineate so-called white southern liberals.

"Most books I have read about the South show the Negro community as all on one level. But there are radicals, conservatives, upper and middle classes and others in the Negro community—the same divisions as are to be found in white communities. All that is what I'm tackling."

It is a lot to tackle but Moon is well-suited to do the job. He has been writing about Negroes since 1929. In his early days, he says, "I started out wirting purely on a folk level. But that didn't satisfy me. It wasn't enough simply to deal with "the quaintness." Once I saw that it was a deeper thing, I tried looking deeper."

Moon, who was born in the North, says that he, "wasn't born with that awful heritage of fear of race." He has lived in the South off and on since the age of ten. He lived there through the critical period of 1929 to 1935—and this was the period during which he acquired his realization of the crucial nature of the caste system.

I wanted to know what Moon had seen in the South that convinced him of the oppressive nature of that region.

Saw Klan Parade

"I remember seeing a Klan parade in 1930," he recalled. "It was led by three cops on city motorcycles in a small Florida town. That made quite an impact on me. I'd seen the Klan before, but never led by city officials."

This modern Abolitionist—who is for the total abolition of the caste system and of all Jim Crow—sees the re-education of white America as just about the main job.

"I don't think it's hopeless," he said, and' speaking of the southern white, added, "Because once the southern white does become pro-Negro there's no one who is more 'pro.'

"I think that the chief difficulty now is that there's little progressive white leadership in the South. The only force that I can see now capable of producing that leadership is the CIO, but unfortunately the CIO's educational program in the South is falling dawn, not doing nearly as much as it should.

"The whole problem there is that they are still not sure of techniques. They are still terribly conscious of pressure from the community. But they certainly have made a start and I think they have done more than any other group The CIO touches the masses."

Negro's Present Status

At this point Mrs. Moon entered the apartment. A slight, blonde woman, with an energetic manner, and very pretty, she immediately prepared a cool drink for each of us. Moon's current book is dedicated to his wife. After a few moments Mrs. Moon left the writer and I alone, and he resumed, now discussing the current status of the Negro as compared with his situation after World War I.

"The biggest difference between the end of this war and the last war is that the Negro is much better unified," he said. "There is better leadership too. He's learned much more about the techniques of propaganda, and also—which is much more important—has made a much larger dent in the industrial setup. There were more jobs and better jobs available for the Negro in this war, and this will have good effects for the future."

Moon has kept himself very carefully attuned to currents in Negro literature and, as a Doubleday editor, has been in a position to have close contact with Negro writing and writers, and with writing by whites about Negroes. Here are his views on this situation:

Negro Writers Today

"There's a bigger chance for the Negro writer today than at any period since the so-called Negro renaissance of the 'twenties.' All publishers are looking for good books by Negro writers. Doubleday is doing a great many books about and by Negroes.

"Doubleday's George Washington Carver award of $2,500 for any book about the Negro in America, is open to both white and Negro. The first award was given recently to Fannie Cook, a white writer from St. Louis. The book deals with the transition of a Negro family from the depression era into the better economic condition which the war brought on in many areas, mainly in terms of the union movement. The award remains open indefinitely."

He spoke of "a whole new group of younger Negro writers coming up" mentioning William Attaway, Ralph Ellison, Owen Dodson, Alice C. Browning, Chester Himes, Ann Petry, George Lipscomb, Margaret Walker, Gwendolyn Brooks, Shirley Graham, and Frank Yerby.

Segregation Costly

At this point Moon wanted to get back to "Primer for White Folks," pointing out that it contained writing by both Negroes and whites. I asked him if he knew of any other book like it and he shook his head.

"As I said in my preface," he went on, "segregation is a costly experiment. We know what it has cost the Negro; it is time to figure out what it has cost us and how much longer we can afford the luxury."

I then asked him if he wanted to make a guess about what the future might bring, and he ducked as though I had thrown something at him.

9-29-45

"Writing books is bad enough," he said, grinning. "Now you want me to be a crystal gazer. But I will say this. We in America are at the crossroads. One fork leads to a democratic solution of our racial dilemma and the other to violence and a mockery of all the things for which we have fought in this war.

"Let's not underestimate the forces which want us to take the second fork in the road. The Klan has only gone underground, and not very deep at that. When it is revived it will work with a whole litter of native fascist offshoots. This block will function not only in the South but in the North as well. It will try to make inroads into veteran organizations. Gerald L. K. Smith is hard at that job right now. A part of industry will finance them in the false hope that they will break up trade unions. They will have many faces and many masters, and sometimes we will fail to recognize them."

Now Is the Time

"If we do, we are lost. By 'we' I mean every Negro and every white man who believes in the brotherhood of man. First they will say that their only interest is in putting the Negro back in his place. But if they accomplish that it will soon be the Jew, then the trade union movement, and so on down the line, even to you and me.

"We must organize against them. They are strong but we can be stronger if we work together. That is my job as a writer and I am only one of a number of such writers, Negro and white, Protestant, Catholic and Jew, native and foreign born. If we work as hard as they do we are safe. I'm glad the Negro press is in that fight. I only wish more whites would read and understand what papers like yours are doing."

Bucklin Moon belongs to that tradition of democratic writers which reached its highest stage a century ago in the work of Harriet Beecher Stowe, William Lloyd Garrison, Col. Thomas Wentworth Higginson, and others. That tradition is being revived again.

Joe Louis Biography

The St Louis Argus Missouri

When Joe Louis, world's heavyweight champion, was awarded the Legion of Merit citation by the United States Army recently, he was asked by a youngster, "How did you lick Max Schmeling. Joe?" Sergeant Louis replied: "Remember, little fellow, he beat me, too." This typical modesty is only one of the characteristics of the fighter brought out in a revealing biography entitled Joe Louis, American by Margery Miller. to be published October 31. This book about an unofficial ambassador of his people will be released by Current Books, Inc., A. A. Wyn, publisher. 10.13.45

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'AMERICANS ALL'

By DR. DANIEL A. POLING

The distinguished Swedish economist and sociologist, Gunnar Myrdal, has created a new if controversial landmark in social science with his two volumes, "An American Dilemma: the Negro Problem and Modern Democracy." Five years of research, with 75 helpers, financed by the Carnegie Corp., have gone into these 1,483 pages.

DR. POLING

Fifteen thousand pages of manuscript were contributed as source material. The work has been greeted as "the most penetrating and important book on our contemporary American civilization that has been written."

Now comes the negative. Dr. Leo P. Crespi, distinguished in the field of minority problems and assistant professor of psychology at Princeton University, challenges Gunnar Myrdal. The Negro problem is primarily a moral issue, says Myrdal. The Negro problem is primarily a socio-economic problem, says Crespi.

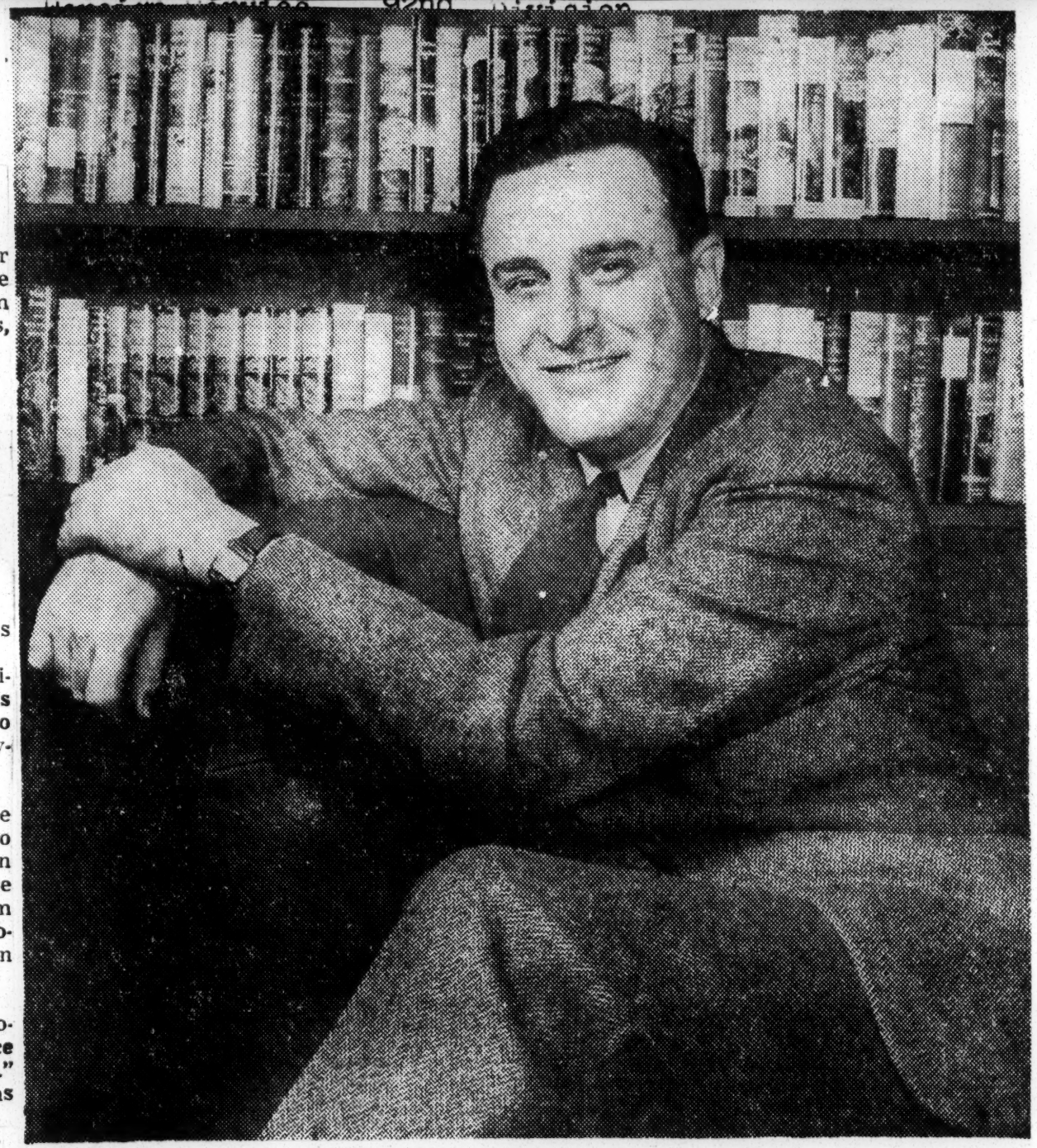
Crespi affirms that to represent the Negro problem as principally a moral issue, denying the conclusions of social scientists generally, plays directly into the hands of groups antagonistic to the present position of social science. He recognizes the fact, however, that religious apologists will be happy.

* * *

Crespi affirms, "Myrdal's stress upon morality . . . puts the emphasis in the wrong place. It suggests treating the individual to eliminate Negro prejudice—with the remedies of ethical exhortation—whereas society is more properly the patient and the remedies are social and economic planning which will remove the gain from prejudice." Crespi admits that "prejudice is a moral or a psychological issue in the sense that the locus of the value conflict lies in the individual."

* * *

Turning again to his own thesis, he affirms, "Raise the economic status of the whites and they will cease to use . . . race prejudice to lock out the Negro from competition for their jobs." Myrdal's critic, in his analysis of this monumental work, seems to reach the conclusion that Myrdal proves the opposite.



BUCKLIN MOON—PM photo by M ry Morris

Dett's Biography To Be Published

HAMPTON, Va. — A brief biography of the late Dr. R. Nathaniel Dett, founder of the Musical Art Society at Hampton Institute, is being published at the local college and will be distributed to Musical Art patrons, Don A. Davis, chairman of the society has announced. Dr. Dett died two years ago while engaged in war service at a USO center in Battle Creek, Mich.

Commemorating the birth of the distinguished musician, composer, and choir director, who was born in Niagara Falls, on Oct. 11, 1882, the publication will be mailed without charge to patrons of the society who request copies within the next two weeks. It was written by Miss Marguerite Pope, of Newport News, a pupil of Dr. Dett at Bennett College, and is being printed by the Hampton Institute Press.

Dr. Dett, who initiated the Musical Art Society concerts in 1918, was on the staff of Hampton Institute from 1913 until 1943. He edited the well-known "Religious Folk Songs of the Negro" while at Hampton and led the Hampton Institute choir on its tour of Europe in 1930. Miss Dorothy Maynor, noted soprano, was one of his pupils and a member of the choir.

Hampton Does "Swing" Book; Fans Organize

LOS ANGELES — A new page in racial and musical history is being made by Lionel Hampton, band leader.

On the coast for a series of theatrical engagements, Hampton is to complete his "Swing Book."

The "Swing Book" is expected to gain world-wide recognition for the Negro's contribution to the development of jazz and swing.

Working with Hampton in putting out the "Swing Book" is Alice C. Browning of Chicago's nationally known NEGRO STORY magazine fame.

In connection with "Hampton's Swing Book" and other activities, a nation-wide organization of Lionel Hampton Fan Clubs are being organized. The first club in this network began in Toledo, Ohio when a group of white girls, enthusiastically joined in forming a club to listen to Hampton's records which are in great demand.

Application for charters for membership in the Lionel Hampton Fan Club National Organization should be sent to "Lionel Hampton's Swing Book," 4019 Vancennes Avenue, Chicago 15, Illinois.

MAGAZINE, EDITOR SAYS

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (ANP) — "Color," the tabloid publication, will be published in magazine form around Thanksgiving, with new sport features and success stories, Editor Wells announced last week. It will be bound to the same size as Life with the size doubled.

"Negro South" To Be Published By Sepia Socialite

NEW ORLEANS—(ANP)— "The Negro South" a quarterly publication giving a treatise on the progress and needs of the southern Negro, will be off press early next month, it was announced here this week by the Socialite Publishing company, publishers of the Sepia Socialite weekly newspaper.

This will be the third publication put out by this company since 1943. In 1943 they published a 168 page edition, "The Negro in Louisiana" that was heralded one of the best special editions ever published. In 1944, they published "This is Our War, Too" which was a stimulus for the Negro in the war effort.

11-1945 Bibliography

Labor Fact Book 7 Bares Huge Corporate Profit Rise

Daily Worker 9-3-45

By LOUIS F. BUDENZ New York, N.Y.

If we know what's what in regard to the war economy, we won't let the monopolies pull the wool over our eyes (or anybody else's) in the present postwar crisis. One of the favorite wails of Big Business now (through the pages of the New York Times and elsewhere) is that full employment legislation will be too big a burden on "free enterprise" interests. A picture of emaciated corporations, denied their full share of profits, is suggested to the public eye.

LOUIS F. BUDENZ

The farcical character of this picture is seen from a reference to what has actually taken place during the war. Corporate savings have risen to four times what they were in the balmiest days of Herbert Hoover, before the big crash. For 1929, to give the exact figures, these corporate savings totaled $1,250,000,000. In 1944, they had risen to $5,400,000,000 for the year.

Business reserves look even bigger proportionally than this nice little nest egg, and they are as big as they look. Business enterprises, it is estimated, had at least $47 to $58 billions of cash and government bonds at the end of 1943, "in addition to their 1941 year-end holdings." And as to profits—they rose from 1939 to 1943, before taxes, 333 per cent. During the same period, wages of employes of private industry, before taxes, rose only 58 per cent. In other words, the allegations of the National Association of Manufacturers on the relation of wages and profits are pure fiction. They will not stand up under examination. 9-3-45

MINE OF INFORMATION

Such are some of the facts and figures which Labor Fact Book 7, just off the press, brings to the busy trade union executive, Every two years, for the last fourteen years, one of these valuables research booklets has been issued by the Labor Research Association for the benefit of the labor movement. On the desk of a trade union official or any other person active in community or labor work, it is a ready gold mine of information. The reasonable price at which it is published puts it within reach of every one.

Labor and all progressive groups have, for instance the battle for a permanent Fair Employment Practises Committee on their hands at the present moment. It's a serious undertaking, which will require mass meetings, letters to newspapers, the organization of committees, large-scale pressure on Congress. Throughout the current Labor Fact Book there run the reports on the FEPC battle, the stand taken by AFL and CIO, the obstacles put in its path, its course in Congress up to the time of the book's publication.

Thus, in succinct form, there is provided the ammunition for making the fight more effective. Statements can be made with more assurance, when the pages of the Fact Book are consulted. Facts can be incorporated in leaflets or in speeches with more ease and certainty by making use of this helpful research job. 9-3-45

CAREFUL RESEARCH

There is likewise the big work now being done by labor for help to the returning war veterans. Few things are of more current importance than this. The projects begun by trade unions for the benefit of the veterans, the aid given by the labor movement to GI legislation, the prospects ahead for further activities appear in the pages of this book. When we review what the unions have done for the men who have gone across the seas to fight for liberation, we are surprised to see that so much has been accomplished up to date. It's a good record which has to be brought before the community—and speeded further by labor in the much larger job of labor-veterans cooperation now ahead. Careful research, it can be observed, has gone into the collections of facts in this field.

Let's not forget, either, to refer to Labor's no-strike war record, as set down in this book. So many falsehoods have appeared in the commercial press on this matter—and so many of them will be resurrected against labor in the fight over joblessness—that it is well to have at hand the true record. And that record shows—a set down in the pages of the Fact Book—a remarkable self-discipline by labor in which the whole nation can rejoice.

In 1942, despite a rise of 7 per cent in workers employed and in the face of many provocations by the employing interests, the time lost through strikes declined 84 per cent below 1941! That was the patriotic manner in which labor responded to its duty in the war. For 1943, if we exclude the sabotaging activities by John L. Lewis, the number of man-days idle were actually less than in 1942.

NEGRO HANDBOOK

One of the new and welcome features of No. 7 in the Fact Book series is the inclusion of a schedule of the number of Negro members in various trade unions, taken from the Negro Handbook. The resultant discussion of the rising membership of Negroes in the labor organizations serves as a fine reminder to the labor officials everywhere of their duty to protect the reconversion job rights of the Negro unionists. This is no less good to see than the much wider information on the reserves and finances of the monopolies than has appeared heretofore in this series. 9-3-45

For the new period before us, there is no gift for a labor man or woman which is more to the point than this book and no purchase which an active trade unionist should more willingly make. Labor Fact Book 7 is indispensable for fully effective labor activity.

S

Ben Burns

Chicago Defender

Adventures In Bohemia—N.Y. Version

IN THE SUPER-INTELLECTUAL, Bohemian world of New York, there are undoubtedly more screwballs per capita than any other city in America. Some folks—especially those who live across the Hudson River on the other side of America—get all hot and bothered about the crackpot antics of the Broadway hoochy-coochy set but if you're one of those folks, like myself, who get a big laugh out of the topsy-turvy personal life and times of wacky characters, you'll get a bang out of three books I've had the pleasure of reading during this, my vacation down Indiana way. Chicago Ill.

Undoubtedly in the top brackets for its high laugh content as well as its flavorsome, fable-like qualities is Samuel Hopkins Adams' "A. Woollcott: His Life And His World" (Reynal & Hitchcock, N.Y. $3.50). While essentially a biography of the infamous "Man Who Came To Dinner," Adams has had the good sense to weave into his tale every anecdote ever told about the one man who seems to have made the business of being a critic really high finance. In some way his book reads like a "Try And Stop Me" with continuity. 8-4-45

Typical is the story told about Woollcott's first discovery of Paul Robeson playing in "Taboo." Woollcott's commentary was that he didn't know where Robeson came from, but wherever it was, he'd better go back there. But when Robeson appeared in "Emperor Jones," Woollcott failed to recognize him and promptly hailed Robeson as a genius. He invited Robeson to a party, but the Negro actor stepped on his toes again by vulgarizing Scotch in a highball with ginger ale.

Woollcott got over it and together with Heywood Broun was instrumental in launching Robeson on his singing career.

So runs the zesty biography throughout, loaded with a super-abundance of wit that makes Adams' book a joy from cover to cover.

Story Of Group Theatre

IN A MUCH MORE SERIOUS vein is Harold Clurman's case history of the late, much-lamented Group Theatre. But "The Fervent Years" (Alfred A. Knopf, N.Y., $3.50) is also in many ways a story of a crowd of zaney whacks even though they produced some of the finest theatres in American stage history. Geniuses they're called sometimes. 9-9-45

Clurman has written a resume of the group from its earliest moments up to its final demise a victim to the lure of Hollywood cash, through the eyes of a man who personally was one of its founders. For those who have followed the group's productions on Broadway from "The House of Connelly" through the revolutionary "Waiting For Lefty" and its final "Thunder Rock," Clurman's story is intriguing reading even though he is writing with prejudiced opinions on much that the group did.

The defeatist tone which marks his conclusions on the possibility of a first class actors' company on Broadway are not justified by the accomplishments of the group itself. Evident through out are the seeds of personality strife that ripped the group apart finally because the theatre is infested with queers who have not learned how to cooperate under the spotlight.

Chicago, Ill.

A Doggy Tale

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK and in a jollier mood is a mirthful bit of cartooning by Don Freeman, dubbed "It Shouldn't Happen..." (Harcourt, Brace & Co., N.Y. $2). Of course a dog is what it shouldn't happen to and the dog in this case is Pvt. Albert C. Bedlington Jr., whose dog tags got the best of him. The rest is the case history of any GI—for what happens to Pvt. Bedlington Jr., when he does a Dr. Jekyl Mr. Hyde act that changes him into a dog is what happens to any soldier in the army.

Take for instance the three-day pass he got

Being a dog a Dixie bus driver mistook him for a Negro and ordered him to the back seat with a "Where d'ya think y'are anyhow."

His "America, of course" answer didn't help. just got him bounced off the bus. But happily there was a lift with an old colored farmer that got him into town faster than the flat-tire trouble. And so it goes with a "It Shouldn't Happen...." There's even a Congressional problem of how he got an upper berth without a priority. Prober is a solon who looks remarkably like a dog but looks remarkably like a solon who loves merry moments.

Two Americans Look at Brotherhood

Detroit Free Press – Mich.

WHEN HE WAS SIX, Pauli Robeson, the singer's son, brought up in England, saw a company of Africans on the set of "Sanders of the River." The boy exclaimed, "Why, there are lots of brown people, lots of black people, too; we're not the only ones."

Young Robeson is now old enough to be an engineering student at Cornell. But in the intervening years many others have come to echo his words: "We're not the only ones."

Pauli's mother, Eslanda Goode Robeson, speaks for them in "African Journey" (John Day) when, at the end, she says, "The people of the world, in fighting for their own freedom, have come at long last to sense that no man can be free until all men are free."

It is significant that her book is the record of a trip taken by herself and her nine-year-old son in 1936. Even five years ago its purpose would have had little hearing.

In England Mrs. Robeson was always being told that she and her husband were "special" or exceptional Negroes. She had no refutation for the clincher that she had never been in Africa and, consequently, could not speak of or for Africans.

* * *

DETROIT'S BAD PRESS continues in "All Brave Sailors" (Fischer), by John Beecher, appropriately the great-grand-nephew of Harriet Beecher Stowe.

8-12-45

After Pearl Harbor, Beecher was Southern representative of the President's Committee on Fair Employment Practice until he became purser of the SS Booker T. Washington, first U. S. Merchant Marine ship sent out with a mixed crew under the command of the Nation's first Negro ship captain.

"We were at sea on my first trip when we heard over the radio about the Detroit race riot," writes Beecher. "It struck us all as something that couldn't possibly have happened, incomprehensible, yet we knew it was true. * * * Here we were penned up, men of all races and many nationalities, in the narrow quarters of a small ship, under the strain of constant danger, restricted by the black-out to a few crowded fo'c'sles and mess-rooms, yet there was no conflict among us. It ought to be a lot easier even to avoid conflict in all of Detroit, in vast America, in this enormous world. You could never convince anybody who was ever a part of the Booker T. Washington that race conflict is something natural, not engineered by a few to keep the many apart.

"* * * These men were our brothers, far easier to understand than the Nazi prisoners who spoke impeccable English, or than the lynchers in our own Detroit."

Beecher says the Booker T. Washington crew don't like to hear their ship called an "experiment" in race relations. The race relations on the ship took care of themselves because everyone was working on the job they all had in common. Beecher thinks that building a peace that will stay put is a big enough job for all the world from now on in.

BILBOISM SCORED

The Pittsburgh Courier

War Department Booklet Claims End Of Segregation Is Wisest Long-Run Policy

Pittsburgh, Pa. 9-29-45

WASHINGTON (ANP)—A War Department publication says that "the ultimate in teamwork cannot accrue where lines (of segregation) are drawn" and proceeds to say that although segregation in some communities must be recognized as a fact and its adoption represents "wiser long-run policy," certainly "through the educational process," groundwork for its eventual elimination should be laid.

In the pamphlet titled "Civilian Personnel Officer's Employee Relations Manual," the Army services force has attempted to convey to its representatives in industrial installations operating under Army jurisdiction sound principles of personnel management.

In June, 1944, there were some 118,527 Negroes, or thirteen and five-tenths per cent of the total force, employed by the War Department, the largest employer in the country.

The ASF publication discusses courteous and equitable treatment of employes, calls attention to the Presidential order establishing the Government's non-discriminatory policy, recommends procedures for maintaining high production through utilization of all available workers, and considers at length the question of segregation.

"Where some measure of segregation must be adopted because the community pattern demands it," the manual says, "it should never be attended by any form of discrimination in opportunity, working conditions, facilities, pay, or the like. Neither should exactions, placed on individuals in the minority group, be any greater or less than those placed on other employes, nor should promotional opportunities be withheld from them."

The Philadelphia Tribune

Book Review

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

9-29-45

By HENRY McCRARY, JR.

THE STORY OF THE SPRINGFIELD PLAN—BARNES AND NOBLE, Inc., New York, N. Y. $2.75.

Someone once said, and quite accurately, that the proof of the pudding is in the eating. The Story of the Springfield Plan—201 pages of delightfully informative material—is proof in black and white that the forces of intolerance and bigotry can be bridled through the medium of cooperative effort on the part of the citizens of anyone community in America.

This little book, edited by Clarence I. Chatton and Alice L. Hallingan, both directors in the Springfield, Mass., public schools, outlines the program Springfield adopted some five years ago for the betterment of its communities

Realizing that the increased integration of various ethnic groups into Springfield's expanding society world sooner or later created mounting complexities, the officials of the board of education there began to teach the students the fnudamental principles of democracy. Peoples of all descents—British, Irish, Jew, Italian, Canadian, Scandinavian, Negro, Greek, Syrian and Polish—make up the 160,000 population, and the children of these races have learned that living and working together as a whole, is the only way for political, economic and social security.

In the Springfield schools, Negro teachers instruct all-white pupils, or Negro and white pupils. The average pupil in the schools does not know the existence of racial prejudice.

The book, although non-fiction and of a historical nature, is easy reading. Nowhere from cover to cover is there that heaviness of material which so often clouds the interest of factual manuscripts. As the pages are read and the wealth of information imparted, the interest is heightened.

The programs, as inaugurated first in the elementary schools, weaves its way through the grade schools and on to Springfield's three colleges. The authors have adeptly traced the different methods employed in the Plan as it grew to its present position as the primary force in the daily living of the younger generation of the city.

The Springfield Plan, which has attracted nation-wide attention, is not merely applicable to one city in the New England States. Its principles are founded on the basis of a real working democracy.

9-29-45

This little book, with its wholesome aspect and its surprising detail, would do well to be studied in every State in the Union, so that others, who have not yet learned the better way of life, may be enlightened and understand that democracy can work.

HARTFORD, CONN.
TIMES
Cir. D. 82,213

JUL 22 1945

Negro Demands Quicker Progress

DEMOCRACY LIMITED, by Eric E. L. Hercules; Central Publishing House. Reviewed by A. I. P.

Mr. Hercules is a Negro journalist who is impatient at the social and economic progress his race finds itself able to make and what he has written is really a demand for the easing of restraints. His attack on white clergy for not doing more to relieve racial tensions is more caustic than warranted by all the facts. Psychological, cultural and economic phases of the question are dealt with, but Mr. Hercules has probably spread his work too thinly over these to produce an important contribution to the cause he seeks to serve.

League Offers Ways to Better Race Relations

The Philadelphia Tribune

9-4-45

NEW YORK, N. Y.—Constructive steps to better race relations taken by local volunteer "Service Councils," of the National Urban League for Social Service among Negroes, 1133 Broadway, are described in a leaflet, "Adventures in Community Cooperation," which the League released this week.

The leaflet tells of results achieved by several of these Councils working without paid staff, as for example the opening of an interracial community center in Hartford, Conn., a school project for bettering race relations in Morristown, New Jersey, and employment of Negroes for the first time by the Bell Telephone Company in Indianapolis, Ind.

Phil. Pa.

"What has been done in three cities, large and small, can be done in hundreds," said Leslie Pinckney Hill, President of Cheyney Training School for Teachers, Cheyney, Pa., and a sponsor of the Service Councils, in commenting on the leaflet. "There is an amazing amount of interest and activity in race relations throughout the country. The need is coordination of organizations and acceptable techniques."

GUIDE BOOK SHELF

The Journal Guide
Norfolk Va.

10-6-45

New Children's Book Shows Unity

TWO IS A TEAM By Lorraine and Jerold Beim and Ernest Crichlow, Harcourt Brace and Co., $1.75.

Here is a delightful children's story which I am sure will become quite popular with the very young. They will love Ted and Paul, its joint heroes. The story is a simple one, but it teaches a basic lesson in human living and understanding which many persons much older than this book's intended audience can learn. Its theme is summed up neatly on its title..

Ted is a little Negro boy and Paul is a little white boy, but that doesn't make any difference, for they are the same size and like to do the same things. The conflict comes in when they decide to make a roller coaster. Ted thinks he knows best how to make it and Paul thinks he knows best how to make it. They couldn't agree to make it together so each goes off to make his own.

When each had finished, they decided to have a race but something happens when they are speeding down the steep hill which makes both of them quite sad. Everything comes out all right in the end and they find out that if the two of them had worked together, that a much better roller coaster would have been the result.

10-6-45

This book introduces us to the very charming paintings of the noted young New York artist, Ernest Crichlow. This is the first book that he has illustrated and I am quite sure that after the children enjoy those pictures they will want to see many more picture books illustrated by this artist.

Parents who are interested in quality books for the very young should certainly not miss "Two Is A Team."

—MARGARET TAYLOR GOSS

Seniority Works Both Ways

the People's Voice New York, N.Y.

[*SENIORITY AND THE NEGRO WORKER*, by Robert C. Weaver, American Council on Race Relations, 32 West Randolph st, Chicago. Unpublished report. No charge for copies.]

9-30-45

Reviewed by THELMA DALE, Acting Secretary, National Negro Congress

IN A CLEAR, impressive and well-documented study, Dr. Weaver has presented some uncontrovertible facts in favor of one of the most hotly contested labor issues: seniority modification for the Negro worker. This is not to say that Dr. Weaver calls upon the labor movement to adjust its seniority rules where nesessary to safeguard the wartime gains of the Negro worker in industry, but that is the only logical and sane conclusion which can be drawn from his comprehensive and convincing statement. The author has presented: (1) an analysis of the various types of seniority, i.e., plant-wide, company-wide, departmental or occupational, and combinations of both; (2) a detailed analysis of the job and seniority status of Negroes in three basic industries: automobile, meat packing, and iron and steel; and (3) the seniority status of Negroes generally in the newer war industries, such as electrical equipment and scientific instruments.

The facts presented are very simple and direct: in those industries such as meat packing, and to some extent, auto and iron and steel, where Negroes worked prior to the war, adherence to strict seniority in most instances will operate to keep Negroes on the job. In the newer war industries where Negroes worked for the first time during World War II, and in those occupations which were opened to them for the first time, strict adherence to seniority will operate against the continued employment of Negroes in those categories. 9-29-45

The entire study is a definite factual contribution to the present discussions on this question. However, one feels a lack of concrete proposals set forth. It is understandable that Dr. Weaver does not want to place himself in the position of dictating to the unions on this matter, but as trade unionist myself, I find I have to take sharp issue with the author's statement that "few unions can or will take the step" to adjust seniority even with the full understanding and support of the white and Negro membership.

Dr. Weaver is absolutely correct if he means that most unions, today, are unprepared to get the full approval of their membership in favor of seniority modification, but this does not mean that it impossible to start now to achieve success on this issue in the future. Actually, a few unions in the New York area are already having some success with seniority modification in rehiring. 9-24-45

To the extent that union leadership, itself, gets clear on this question and begins a forthright program of education within the unions, to the extent will we begin to achieve success on this important reconversion step.

Dr. Weaver's study is excellent in establishing clarity on the basis of fact.

Twelve Violent Stories Of The South; Bitter, Powerful, Passionate Writing

The Montgomery Advertiser New Orleans, Louisiana 10-14-45

RED, WHITE AND BLACK, by Murrell Edmunds, Bernard Ackerman, Inc., New York, 1945; 153 pages—$2.

For readers who like their stories realistic, brutal, sexy, and in the Erskine Caldwell-Lillian Smith-William Faulkner tradition, here are twelve stories of the South by a native Virginian now living in New Orleans. Each story is an indictment, not only of the South alone, but of all sections of America. Naturally the stories are based on isolated cases, some of which happened many, many years ago, and the vitriol aimed at the South by Murrell Edmunds loses force in his attempt at impeachment. Boston will probably find it "obscene, indecent and impure" when they get around to it, just as they have other stories concerning the racial problem.

Bigotry, intolerance, injustice, prejudice, and violent passion have long since been found to exist everywhere. This is Murrell Edmunds' attempt to confine it to the South, and it would have been much nicer of Edmunds to have briefed an introduction to state that his bitter pen did not intend to confine itself only to one section of this country. Nevertheless the stories are interesting and they point a vivid moral lesson well worth the reading.

These twelve powerful stories are written about subjects usually too delicate to discuss: Stories about the "little people," the mill workers, the servants, the negroes, and glimpses of a decadent aristocracy. Murder, suicide, rape, violence, all are told with an aggressive impact and a meticulous attention to the forces of inhumanity.

These impassioned stories could never have appeared in magazines without severe censorship; several have been on the O'Brien honor roll. With attention of the country focussed on problems (?) of the South, instead of on their own ignominous shortcomings and ugly cancers, these stories are sure to be read with great interest by stupid radicals whose blatant and loud mouthings serve to hide their own vices. Southerners will read it as they have read others of the same type, remembering the words of Pliny the Elder, "No book is so bad but some profit may be gleaned from it."

Murrell Edmunds is the author of three novels, including BETWEEN THE DEVIL, a first-rate novel highly praised as a moving and powerful story. He has devoted himself to the cause of freedom and brotherhood, he has fought against fascism in America and the existing order of things. RED, WHITE AND BLACK is effective propaganda through the medium of powerful stories, written with such feeling they become well worth the reading.—RAY GOULD.

The Urban League's Report

Atlanta Daily World Atlanta, Ga. 10-45

The National Urban League for social service among Negroes has just made public its annual report, reviewing its activities for the year ending, 1944. It is an impressive record of accomplishments in industrial gains for Negroes as well as inspiring account of interracial cooperation at a difficult period in our nation's history.

1944, the third full year of the war, the report states,, found hundreds of American communities organizing committies to promote better race relations as well as greater participation of Negroes in our 'all-out' war production program. Over 300 full-time employed staff members, thirty-one of whom attached to the national office, were reported.

Continuing its well established tradition, the League made available to worthy students fellowships for study, rounding out a total of 100 such fellowships since 1910. Of the $800,000 expended by its 51 affiliates during 1944, the National office expended $100,000. And in the field of opinion the League has made generous use of the national radio networks, metropolitan newspapers, Negro weekly press as well as its own official organ, opportunity, now published quarterly, in order to achieve its goal, "Victory Through Unity."

"The racial trouble center of the Nation—traditionally located in the Deep South," observes the report, has steadily shifted northward as large numbers of Negroes and whites from southern areas have migrated into border states and northern industrial communities." But the League promises no letup, despite these difficulties. Significantly, it concludes: "splits will grow between special interest groups, racial conflicts will threaten more and more frequently, demobilization and reconstruction plans for the postwar will lay a heavy accent upon the factor of race."

NEW MASSES
(NEW YORK CITY)
OCT 9 - 1945

Jim Crow at the Front

THE NEGRO IN THE ARMED FORCES, *by Seymour J. Schoenfeld. Associated Publishers, Washington. $1.10.*

THIS is a significant little volume. It makes a clear-cut demand for the "complete integration of the Negro in the armed forces," and it comes from the pen of a Lieutenant-Commander in the Navy of the United States, with a supporting and forthright introduction by a Colonel in the Marine Corps—Evans Fordyce Carlson—and an enthusiastic blurb by an American cabinet member—Henry A. Wallace.

The author summarizes succinctly and correctly the findings of the best historical, anthropological, and sociological researches on the Negro. He adds confirmatory and most interesting data from his own personal experiences derived from twenty-two months' service aboard a combat-loaded transport ("Jim Crow," he writes, "never rides a landing craft to an enemy beach"), and so, inevitably, comes to his unequivocal demand for absolute equality in the rights, duties and privileges of the Negro soldier, sailor and marine.

Very considerable advances were made along these lines in the course of the war against fascism (some of which are enumerated here), most notably the use of mixed units in the front lines in the days of the Bulge and the smashing offensive that followed. These came because of necessity and agitation. The advances must be held and expanded. The necessity remains and will remain. Let us not neglect the agitation. Lieutenant-Commander Schoenfeld has provided additional ammunition.

HERBERT APTHEKER.

Education Given Key Role In Improving Dixie Economy

Montgomery Advertiser
Montgomery, Ala.

TALLAHASSEE, FLA., Aug. 3.—(AP)—The South has the nation's best economic opportunity and improvement of the general plan of education is the key to its attainment, a group of Southern educators said in a book released today.

The volume was prepared by some 300 members of the Southern States Work-Conference on Education and was edited by Dr. Edgar L. Morphet, executive secretary of the group and fiscal director for the Florida State Department of Education.

Resources Waste Listed

He said a regional survey resulted in conclusions that:

Although the South has abundant resources, it has the lowest level of living because "a large proportion of human and natural resources . . . have either been wasted or uneconomically utilized."

"From the point of view of science and natural laws, there is no necessity for these conditions to be continued.

"The solution can come only as a result of human foresight and planning on the part of Southerners supplemented by the interest and cooperation of the cities improve the understanding and change the attitude of the people and develop skills that "as yet have been only partially developed."

"The major responsibility for bringing about these improvements rests on the schools and educational institutions of the region. While the schools alone cannot be expected to solve this problem, it cannot be solved without their intelligent and aggressive cooperation. . . .

"The work of the schools and educational institutions must be readjusted in many fundamental respects so as to contribute directly and deliberately at all levels" to the attainment of the major objective.

Educational Funds Low

The book brought out these points on Southern education and economy:

"The Southern States have one-third of the nation's children to educate with one-eighth of the nation's tax-paying ability and one-sixth of the nation's school income.

8-4-45

"The typical Southern State provides for higher education only 80 cents per inhabitant as against $1.70 in the typical State in the rest of the nation.

"Until recently, the Southern region was almost exclusively a furnisher of raw materials to the manufacturing regions. Although it now fabricates a considerable portion of its raw materials, its manufacturing processes are still largely confined to the more elementary levels.

"The rural South is the principal reservoir from which the country's future population is being recruited, largely because of lack of economic opportunity in the Southern region.

"The South has 28.11 per cent of the total population, but 33.84 per cent of the nation's unskilled workers, only 18.33 per cent of the skilled workers, 20.30 per cent of the professional women and 17.59 per cent of the clerks and kindred workers."

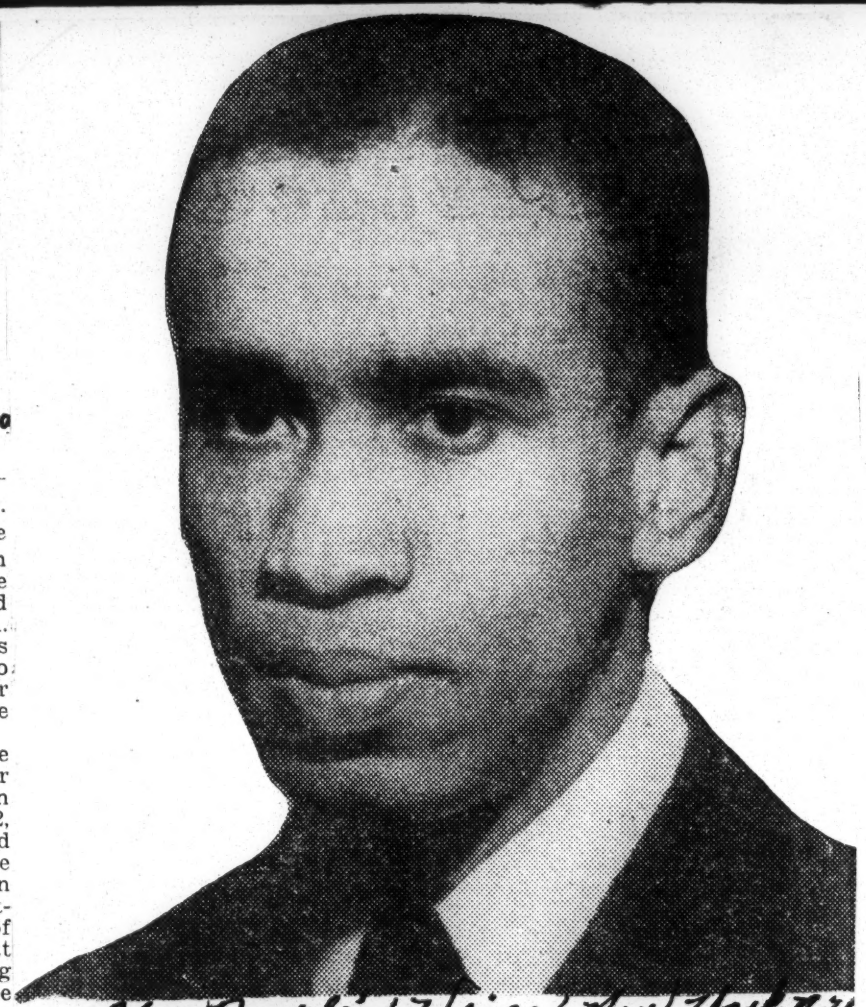
Dett Biography For Musical Art Patrons

The Pittsburgh Courier
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
10-20-45

HAMPTON INSTITUTE, Va.—A brief biography of the late Dr. R. Nathaniel Dett, founder of the Musical Art Society at Hampton Institute, is being published at the local college and will be distributed to musical art patrons, Don A. Davis, chairman of the society has announced. Dr. Dett died two years ago while engaged in war service at a USO center in Battle Creek, Mich.

Commemorating the birth of the distinguished musician, composer and choir director, who was born in Niagara Falls on Oct. 11, 1882, the publication will be mailed without charges to patrons of the society who request copies within the next two weeks. It was written by Miss Marguerite Pope of Newport News, a pupil of Dr. Dett at Bennett College, and is being printed by the Hampton Institute Press.

Dr. Dett, who initiated the Musical Art Society concerts in 1918, was on the staff of Hampton Institute from 1913 until 1932. He edited the well-known "Religious Folk Songs of the Negro" while at Hampton and led the Hampton Institute Choir on its tour of Europe in 1930. Miss Dorothy Maynor, noted soprano, was one of his pupils and a member of the choir.



The People's Voice New York N.Y.
10-20-45

"Great Negro Americans" is one of the latest and most successful books about Negroes. Written by the young and militant Rev. Ben Richardson, this book tells the "cinderella" stories of the rise to fame and glory of such Negroes as "Rochester," Joe Louis, and Marian Anderson.

JEWS, CATHOLICS, NEGROES, AND THE MEDICAL COLLEGES

The Nation — New York City, New York
10-8-45

We were advised and cautioned not to print this article. It would rub too many people the wrong way. The survey on which it was based has already stirred up a hornet's nest. But we can't neglect or ignore the subject. When schools like Harvard, Cornell, Yale, Johns Hopkins, Columbia deny to youths the right to become doctors—not on grounds of scholarship, character, personality and other criteria of fitness—but solely on grounds of race and creed, the public ought to know the facts. The matter is long past due for an airing, not only on the score of fair play to minorities, but also for the future welfare of the medical profession. Read "Discrimination in Medical Colleges" by Frank Kingdon, in the October AMERICAN MERCURY.

11-1945

Bibliography

Slavery and Economics

The Nation

THE BRITISH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION is a field well plowed by historians, but Professor Eric Williams of Harvard University proves that the intensive cultivation of special plots can still yield a worth-while crop. In "Capitalism and Slavery" (Chapel Hill, $3) he has given us a scholarly but incisively written study of the part played by the slave trade in the growth of capitalism and of the part played by a ripened capitalism in the downfall of slavery in the British West Indies. 2-24-45

In his preface Professor Williams asserts that he has not undertaken "an essay in ideas or interpretation" but "strictly an economic study." Be that as it may, he reveals himself as a hard-bitten economic determinist who refuses to see much virtue in the Abolitionist movement beyond its recognition that the game was up.

While it lasted, the triangular trade between Britain, West Africa, and the West Indies, a trade in which the middle and most essential link was black man-power, was a very profitable game indeed. It laid the foundations of some of the most respectable family fortunes in England; it provided part of the capital which financed the Industrial Revolution. But in that fact, as Professor Williams points out, lay the seeds of the system's decay. Britain's new factories were geared to world trade. They were hampered by the monopolies and restrictions of the mercantile system; they wanted to sell everywhere and buy in the cheapest market. Thus the vested interests, which in 1750 were ranged solidly behind the institution of slavery, by 1830 had turned solidly against it—at least in so far as it acted as a prop for the West Indian sugar monopoly. There was no objection to buying slave-grown cotton from the Carolinas or Brazil. 2-24-45

Professor Williams, I think, pushes his economic determinism too far at times. True, the Abolitionists could make little headway as long as the economic climate was adverse. But their efforts certainly hastened the end, and most of the active "saints" were truly disinterested even if rationalized self-interest was the motive of some of their financial backers. However, we can agree about Wilberforce, one of the most disagreeable "do-gooders" in history, whom Professor Williams finds "small" and "smug" and, as a leader, "addicted to moderation, compromise, and delay."

KEITH HUTCHISON

RALPH T. JONES

A Couple of Books On Same Problem

Atlanta Constitution

Atlanta, Ga.

We have had, for the past few days, a guest in Atlanta who, actually, claims this city as his home. Though now living elsewhere, Edwin Peeples is, most truly, an Atlanta by birth, inheritance and education. 4-17-45

It was with very real regret I was forced to cancel a luncheon engagement to meet him, but physical circumstances forced my absence. Fortunately I had inserted the letters "D. V." in my original note of acceptance.

Edwin Peeples is the author of a new novel, with its scene in modern Atlanta. Most of its characters are Negroes and most of the story revolves around the inhabitants of a group of shacks in an alley somewhere in the Peters street section. The title of the book is "Swing Low."

It may be coincidence, but it is interesting that two books with the same theme have come from the publishers this spring. The other, "Black Boy," is by Richard Wright, himself a Negro and now a resident of New York. "Black Boy" is ostensibly the autobiography of the boyhood and early manhood of the author.

Thus we have two books posing the same problem, what of the Negro in the south of today? One by a white man, an Atlantan, and the other by a Negro. It is inevitable they shall be compared.

Atmosphere of Hate Undoubtedly, Wright has produced a splendidly written and moving story in his autobiographical "Black Boy." It is a story that reflects no credit on the white south of today. But I had the feeling, in reading it, that its value, its effectiveness, was injured by the very obvious spirit of resentment, almost hatred, that inspired its writing.

Wright, in his story, introduces now sympathetic white characters, save two or three who are, in each instance, northerners who happen to be temporarily residing in the south. His book, either by direct picture or by indirect omission, condemns the entire white south of today as brutal, unfeeling and unjust in its attitude toward the Negro. Which, to anyone who is intelligent, is obviously a false picture. 4-17-45

I do not believe Wright was deliberate in presenting such a picture, but I do feel his own intense bitterness has resulted in a story which, while admittedly factual, is nevertheless distorted in its atmosphere.

On the Other Hand Author Peeples, in his book, "Swing Low," paints no pleasanter picture of the lot of the Negro in the modern south, in Atlanta, as a matter of fact. Actually, the treatment that his characters receive is more cruel, in many instances, than that accorded Wright's people. There is probably no more bitter indictment of the injustice accorded the Negro than the trial scene, in Fulton court, in Peeples' book. (It is the trial of a white man, obviously guilty, but the charges brought by a Negro. The defendant is acquitted in a few minutes by the jury. In the book, the judge voices his disgust with the obvious miscarriage of justice before dismissing the jury.) 4-17-45

Perhaps the value of "Swing Low" and its greater truth results from the fact that it recognizes there are, in their contacts with Negroes, white people of many types. The troubles of the little group in the story spring, undoubtedly, from the vicious cruelty of a white man. But he is described as a character most despicable from any standpoint. There are, too, understanding and kindly white people who do their utmost to champion the cause of the Negroes.

Both are interesting books. Both are courageous, in that they turn the spotlight on a difficult problem, one which has for too long been hidden behind the falsity of "hush hush." Both can prove valuable in awakening us to the necessity of finding a solution for that difficult problem.

But any solution will not be found through clouds of resentment and hate, which seem to obscure the problem in "Black Boy." The solution, when it is found, will be through the channels of better understanding and of adherence to ideal justice by both races. Which is the way pointed, even if somewhat dimly, in "Swing Low."

Not Great I do not accept either book as truly great. But I do see where both can be extremely valuable, as object lessons in frankness at least. 4-17-45

Peeples has drawn what you instinctively feel to be a true picture. But it is a picture of one phase of Negro life only. His central character is a puzzled, struggling Negro moved to Atlanta from the country. He is well-intentioned and basically honest. But he is faced by problems too difficult for him. He is ruthlessly abused.

The plot becomes, before the end, sheer melodrama.

It is, perhaps, a story of Negro life under circumstances far below the average. It is concerned only with the struggling, often hungry, ill-housed and exploited Negroes. It is concerned not at all with the Negroes of better education, better financial status. But it should open our eyes to the tragic lot of too many poor Negroes of today.

On the other hand, "Black Boy" is the story of an educated Negro who expresses his bitterness against the handicap his racial origin places upon him and who fails to recognize that there are many thinking white men in the south who are just as anxious to lessen or remove racial handicaps as he is.

Negro Authors

Birmingham Age-Ala

The Negro author is getting a hearing. Down to 1918 prominent publishers would not issue books by Negroes who lacked prominent sponsors. Thus Paul Lawrence Dunbar's poems were published because the novelist William Deal Howells spoke for them. Charles W. Chestnutt, perhaps the foremost Negro novelist, got a hearing through the efforts of Walter Hines Page, ambassador to Great Britain in the last war. And the critics Brander Matthews and Richard Watson Gilder were responsible for the works of James Weldon Johnson seeing the light of day.

Yet even these champions did not stress the fact that their literary finds were Negroes. Page even rejected Chestnutt's novel, "The House Behind the Cedars" because it bore unmistakable stamp of Negro authorship. Now-a days, says J. Saunders Redding, professor at Hampton Institute, in the "Publisher's Weekly," Negro books command a hearing because of their authorship. Richard Wright's tragic "Native Son" and "Black Boy" are best sellers. 5-28-45

In other words, the race of the author no longer obscures the message.—Pensacola News.

"Land of The Noble Free"

New York Age N.Y., N.Y.

By LAYLE LANE 1-20-45

DURING a time when most of our leaders are advising the Negro to tear up his roots from the soil for urban areas, is greatly satisfying to find one who is by precept and example showing the possibilites of an enriched rural life.

In "Practical Farming for the South," published by the University of North Carolina, Benjamin Bullock, Professor of Rural Education, Atlanta University, not only provides sensible and scientific instructon for making farming a successful economic activity, but also inspiration for creating a way of living richly rewarding and stimulating.

In a foreword describing an autumn harvest, Mr. Bullock writes: "The farmer, busy with his evening chores, stops for a moment and looks toward the setting sun. All cares and troubles are forgotten, he is filled with reverence and thanksgiving because peace and plenty are in the land. He is a free man, master of his field, living by the product of his own mind and hands." 1-20-45

That this is far from the experience of most of our people in the rural South is the very reason Mr. Bullock has written his book. The author himself has had the experience of growing up on a farm in Edgecombe County, North Carolina, and attending rural schools there. But he has also graduated from the University of Minnesota, studied at Cornell, Rutgers and Columbia. For many years he taught agriculture at Manual Training School at Bordentown, N. J.

While there, his exhibits of fruits and vegetables at the annual Trenton State Fair won many prizes and blue ribbons. He had an uncanny success in getting things to grow and fruit trees to produce in abundance. Had he had the time he could have had an enormous amount of outside work looking after the orchards of "gentlemen - farmers" who had much money but neither the skill nor the knowledge to make prize winners of their crops. 1-20-45

Mr. Bullock from this rich experience and also from his contact with rural people has written his book. Of the rural people, he states: "And especially do I wish to acknowledge the great source of inspiration and information I have gained through friendly, fireside chats with humble farmers, and in browsing through fields and forests, the great libraries and laboratories of nature."

Out of this knowledge he has written on practical farming— dividing his book into Part I Plant Producton; Part II Animal Production; Part III Farm Financing and Literature. Nothing of importance from the tiniest insect pest to the huge combine is omitted. Many illustrations ,too, make clear the methods and practices either to be adopted or avoided.

An important chapter is one on farm cooperatives and the various types and advantages of coopertive services. Herein lies, in my opinion, the solution to the inefficiency ,the isolation and the low standard of living of the typical rural farmer. The modern machinery he needs, the urban conveniences of light, water and sewage, as well as the mental stimulation of contact can all be realized throuh the collective use of his money and labor power. 1-20-45

During these "so-called prosperous times" it is to be hoped that Negro leaders will prepare for the post-war world by encouraging our workers to pool their resources in getting large tracts of land ,both in the North and South. Here we can cushion the effects of the "inevitable depression" by getting a foothold again on the land and producing the food we need in abundance as well as preventing the moral decay which idleness brings, in keeping employed in the ever ceasing toil required to control nature.

In showng how all this can be done NOW by the fullest use of the knowledge and agencies available, Prof. Bullock's book is of great value. In creating a vision of the future for the underprivileged of our group so that they may have a full and happy life," he is providing for a better post-war world.

EVELYN LARUE PITTMAN

Oklahoma City school teacher and Black Dispatch columnist, whose book, "Rich Heritage," has just been published by the Harlow Printing Co., Oklahoma City. The volume contains melodies, stories and pictures of distinguished Negroes and is a combination of music and Negro history for study in elementary schools. (ANP)

W.Y.C. SURVEY AUGUST, 1945

Negro Children

Recent changes in community facilities for the care of dependent and neglected Negro children in Cleveland, New York, and Philadelphia are described and evaluated in "Child Care Facilities for Dependent and Neglected Negro Children in Three Cities," published by the Child Welfare League of America, Inc. The report, a war service project of the league, was made by Abigail F. Brownell of the Pennsylvania Children's Aid Society with an advisory committee, and Vinita V. Lewis as consultant.

"In every sizable city there are those whose concern is great and who will be content only when the country, with a clear conscience, can refer to 'our children' with that spiritual color-blindness which permits no distinctions," Howard W. Hopkirk, executive director of the league, says in his foreword. The cities chosen for the study were known to have done substantial planning for dependent Negro children in prewar years and would therefore be helpful as models. The first subject of study in each community was the total pattern of organization for child care, as a point of departure for the more specialized thesis. Miss Brownell's introduction points out that as the study went on "it became evident that segregation sometimes prevents the full use of existing facilities. . . ."

Findings indicated that colored children now constitute between 35 and 50 percent of the dependent and neglected children in the three cities. The number of dependent white children has decreased, of Negro children, increased. Economic equality for white and colored people is accepted in child care agencies, the report states, but institutional facilities for Negro children are in general definitely less adequate than they are for white, and there is need for more institutional care for the colored children than is available in any of the cities. There are exceptions, but in general, institutional care is usually provided in segregated arrangements. In all three cities segregation is under discussion and is controversial. On the whole Miss Brownell finds encouragement in the distance measured by many agencies towards her goal of integration of programs for white and Negro children. Price $2.50 from the league, 130 East 22 Street, New York 10.

Re: A. Lincoln

New York Times

INTIMATE MEMOIRS OF LINCOLN. Assembled and Annotated by Rufus Rockwell Wilson. 629 pp. Elmira, N. Y.: The Primavera Press. (Limited Edition.) 6-11-45

THE editor of this volume has been so intent upon gathering every scrap of information about Lincoln from all possible sources that he has included many items which are both trivial and dull. Unfortunately, the less significant items are placed at the beginning of the book, where they may easily discourage the reader from going on to the more interesting items that appear later on. The collection includes memories of Lincoln by persons who knew him at various stages of his career from railsplitter to President. All, or nearly all, have previously appeared elsewhere in newspapers, magazines or books. **I. A.**

11-1945

About Books

By CONSTANCE H. CURTIS

THE SPRINGFIELD PLAN: A Photographic Record by Alexander Alland and James Waterman Wise. Viking Press, New York, 1945. 136 pp., $2.50.

Riots and rising delinquency, Bilbos and lynchings too often cause a mounting depression in the hopes of the minorities in America. Progress seems just a word and hope for the future grows dim.

At such a time, a book like **The Springfield Plan,** hits with heavy impact because it holds out real hope for the future, and the proof that there are many people of good will working for the attainment of the true principles of democracy.

A Town For History

Springfield, Mass., is not a large town, its total population is 150,000, but it will go down in the history of the country for the contribution that it is making.

In this double authorized volume the text is accompanied by photographs, the two of which aid in the understanding of what has taken place in this community during the past ten years. The story is a thrilling one, ably and thrillingly presented.

Under the leadership of Dr. John Granrud, superintendent of schools, a program in common sense democracy has been inaugurated. Beginning within the schools, a start has been made in teaching children that all races and all men deserve and should share in the fruits of equality, the idea has taken root and spread throughout the city as a whole.

It is a simple plan—and it has worked because faith and hard labor have gone into the tending of it. The fruits have been, even in such a short time, within three areas. First, realization of the importance of all citizens in making democracy work has grown among both children and adults. They have become eager to assume the responsibilities of citizenship. Second, they understand the multitudinous contributions made to the culture of our country, and the fact that all races are deserving of respect for their contribution. Lastly, there has been an awareness on the part of the community that they are part of something that calls for real team work. Even those who have no clear cut ideas as to the Springfield Plan feel a sense of responsibility to do their share.

Beginning Democracy

These things are really happening. The plan which has brought them about is simple to set into words. Dr. Granrud, having received a report from a Committee on Education for Democracy, knew that his belief that real democracy was not being imparted to his students was true. The Committee recommended that the home, street, church and club must be drawn into closer contact with the schools in teaching democratic principles. They said that teachers had idealized democracy instead of taking the position that it was an ideal not yet attained. They held that this issue should be met and each individual called upon to help work toward the ideal.

Pupils were, they said, to be taught about all of the elements that went to make up our nation, and to know what their contributions and histories were.

Dr. Granrud set about getting the recommendations off paper and into action. He brought in teachers who were a cross section of the democracy he talked about. Race and color played no part in the jobs offered—only worth counted. Classes began to revolve about the idea of all races' contributions. Whether science, sewing, history or histrionics, the part the many had played was emphasized.

Churches and other community organizations were urged to cooperate, and they did. They attended meetings, watched the changes in childrens attitudes, and knew that the plan was sound. When the child left school for the day, he began to find that the forces extended into the home and the rest of the community.

Work bans began to be removed, because it ceased to be fashionable to say that you wouldn't hire Jews, or Negroes, or Slavs. It began to be worthwhile, socially and monetarily, to drop old age prejudices.

The Town's Changed

In many ways the Springfield plan has changed this town, and is changing other parts of the country where watchers have seen what is happening.

There is much yet to be done and many prejudices to be broken, but they are bending to the pressure. Children are learning the workings of their government and the respect of races and individuals necessary to democracy. They take the things they learn home, and where necessary, are teaching parents. Community leaders, housewives, business men and students all are seeing the vision of a brighter, more hopeful future.

All of the facts that have come out of the inauguration of the plan and the pictures of the means by which it is being carried out, are contained in this volume. It makes good reading because it deals with the sort of facts we had begun to believe didn't exist.

Bibliography

When one has finished reading, there is the feeling that if these things can be done by 150,000, they can be done by 150 million, and that total is larger than the population of America.

To say that hope for our country and for the world is beginning to rise in a small Massachusetts community may seem over exuberant —but this factual text brings such hopes forward. It is a book well worth reading —and thinking about—prior to action.

Sixty-Four-Dollar Question

[*SIXTY MILLION JOBS*, by Henry A. Wallace, Simon and Schuster. Paper bound, $1; cloth bound, $2]

Reviewed by EDWARD S. LEWIS, N. Y. Urban League

DURING THE NATIONAL CAMPAIGN of 1944, a reception was held by the political big-wigs in Hartford, Conn., for Secretory Wallace at the conclusion of his New England tour. After flattering introductions by the Governor of Connecticut and the Mayor of Hartford, flavored with reference to Connecticut's industrial progress, Mr. Wallace began to ask questions—"How many war workers do you have in Hartford?" The mayor did not know. "What kind of planning are you doing for jobs after the war?" There was a bit of embarrassed stumbling and the Secretary then lashed out on the importance of Hartford's planning to provide jobs for all after the war.

To Henry Wallace the prospect of 60 million jobs for America is no visionary dream, but a goal that is practical and obtainable if we are to preserve our system of free enterprise. In his recent book the arguments for achieving this objective are put forth concisely and convincingly, and bristling with facts and figures from all available sources.

Mr. Wallace's thesis is that we have developed the technological skills and the resources are available for a 200-billion-dollar national production which will provide full employment. With government helping to create the basic conditions of full employment and cooperation of business, labor and farm groups, 60 million jobs by 1950 may be achieved.

ROOSEVELT'S GOAL

When the late President Roosevelt announced a postwar goal of 60 million jobs in his famous speech at Soldiers Field in Chicago in October, 1944, it was regarded as a mere political promise by the opposition. While campaigning in the East, however, the Vice-President was impressed with the encouragement given to the people by the President's remarks and he set out immediately after election day to follow up his pledge: "that the government would not shirk its responsibility to all the people."

In pointing up this responsibility to all the people Secretary Wallace in his first chapter, "The People's Peace," gets the record straight with this statement: "It is absolutely essential, therefore, that we squarely face the problem of racial and religious discrimination. . . . When 13 million of our people are Negroes, 23 million are Catholics and 5 million are Jews—a total equal to about one-third of our population—the existence of social tension must be faced with boldness and courage."

EDWARD S. LEWIS

Mr. Wallace confronts squarely the problem of job discrimination and advocates strongly for permanent fair employment machinery in the government. He realizes that it is not enough to merely outline the problem and make pious hopes that it must not be met head on with practical measures.

Although Mr. Wallace is easily one of the best informed officials in the government as a result of his posts with the Departments of Agriculture and Commerce and as Vice-President, he felt the necessity for getting his facts and opinions from the man in the street, not only in our own country but also in China, Soviet Russia and in Latin America.

Where will we get the 60 million jobs? To this sixty-four-dollar question, Mr. Wallace comes up with convincing answers. A total of 60 million jobs would be distributed as follows: manufacturing and mining, 15 million; trade, 9 million; agriculture, 8 million; government and armed forces, 7 million; finance, service and miscellaneous, 6 million; self employed, 6 million; construction, 3½ million; utilities and transportation, 3½ million; domestic service, 2 million.

The methods and means that can be used to get 60 million jobs are graphically described by Secretary Wallace and they make fascinating and highly interesting reading. Space will not permit a discussion of them, but the writer strongly recommends that the readers of *PV* put this book Number One on their lists. It should be required reading for all American citizens. The core of his discussion is that we can have an economy based on abundance rather than scarcity—that in fields like business, education and medical care, the government can provide leadership and direction without necessarily taking over the total responsibility as in a planned economy.

Time is of the essence and we must have immediate action by all American citizens. The core problems, etc., "Sixty Million Jobs" comes to grips with a practical approach for getting them. step by step to our top representatives in Congress. Mr. Wallace gives the precinct level and from every worker his own index cue and points out that individual citizens have a responsibility for political action along with pressure and special interest groups. It should begin at his Senators and his Representatives.

Again, Mr. Wallace gives us his own index to be used in keeping an account of himself, of political activity to be scrapped.

Unlike the mass of literature dealing with economic planning,

Rights and Duties In A Democracy

Journal & Guide
Norfolk, Va.

"The Negro In Our History"—A Notable Book

By LUTHER P. JACKSON

DURING the current year there was published the eighth edition of **The Negro In Our History**, a history textbook by Carter G. Woodson. First appearing in 1922 in its first edition, this book has proved to be so popular, and each edition has sold so rapidly, that the author has found it necessary to publish edition after edition until in 1945 it has reached the eighth. Altogether more than 50,000 copies have been sold, more probably than all the other works of this prolific writer put together, and far more than any other Negro history textbook that has ever been written. In view of these facts **The Negro In Our History** deservedly ranks as a notable book while its author takes his place as one of the most notable Negroes of our day.

DR. JACKSON

The Negro In Our History is a notable book for the reasons that, with respect to the subject it treats, it is the most informing, the most popular, the most widely read, and the most useful work on the market. It is used as a textbook by hundreds of schools, as a reference work by our leading libraries, as collateral reading by accredited colleges, and as a reliable source by numerous editors and publishers.

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It is perhaps not too much to say that the facts for the average speech on the history of the Negro by the average person on a public program anywhere in our country are drawn from this book. If any layman attempts the writing of a pamphlet or article on the subject of the Negro in history he too turns immediately to **The Negro In Our History**. A number of years ago the Southern Commission on Interracial Cooperation brought out a pamphlet, "**America's Tenth Man**, which summarizes in a few pages the main achievements of Negroes in our country. Like everybody else the author of this pamphlet turned to **The Negro In Our History** for his facts.

In the eighth edition of this notable book are 691 pages. It is subdivided into 36 chapters and interspersed with 245 illustrations. In this brief space of 691 pages the author carries the reader all the way from the African background to the present time. He even supplies a chapter on the Negro in World War II. For the most part the illustrations are pictures of individuals and groups who have achieved distinction in some field of human endeavor.

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Like all textbooks this volume furnishes only the main outlines or high spots in the history of the Negro in our country. For a more intensive study the reader must consult hundreds of other books and articles to fill in the countless events which no textbook can supply. The fact is that each of the thirty-six chapters in **The Negro In Our History** can be expanded into a whole book, so that from this one book as a foundation, 36 books can be written.

It is thus a trail blazer to point the way for other writers to follow, and it is a work to show how very big the subject of Negro history is. Thirty years ago the average American thought that the Negro had not accomplished enough in history to justify an attempt to write one book about him; but now we know, thanks to **The Negro In Our History**, that his accomplishments have been so significant that hundreds of volumes may be written concerning him.

When we hear that fifty thousand or one hundred thousand copies of a work of fiction have been sold it is nothing unusual, because the reading public is gripped by a novel, but when a history book becomes a big seller, it is most remarkable. History is known the country over as a dry subject, so dry that hardly more than one student out of a thousand reads it any further after painfully passing a high school or college course in it. The history textbook is quickly sold by nearly all students and the subject is banished from their minds.

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But there is something different about **The Negro In Our History**. This notable book is cherished by many students, while adults of education treat it as an indispensable volume for their book collection. What is the factor which makes the difference? The author of this book is America's best informed person on this subject, but regardless of the author, a similar book during the past twenty years would have the same demands made for it.

The Negro in our country is constantly struggling for a "way out" of his difficulties and he correctly sees in **The Negro In Our History** and all the other growing numbers of books on Negro history, one of the solutions for his problem. He now knows that no race can advance successfully unless that race has some appreciation for the part its members have played in developing the civilization in which they find themselves.

The duties of present day Negroes are numerous. I know of no greater duty, even the duty of voting, than that of reading and studying **The Negro In Our History** and other works like it.

Courant Views On Books

Hartford, Conn.
Courant

Loyal Americans

THE NEGRO IN THE ARMED FORCES—By Lieutenant Commander Seymour J. Schoenfeld, USNR.. Associated Publishers, Washington, D. C.; $1.10.

Reviewed by
REV. ALBERT M. LAMBERT

Neither admirable nor desirable, war is wicked, wasteful and foolish. Yet, since mankind is so constituted, the forces of evil must be withstood and if possible overcome. In a conflict like the present war, certain individuals and groups stand out conspicuously. Although they do not engage in war for war's sake, they consider it a crime against decency and humanity to allow that wickedness against which they fight to prevail. This little book by Lieut. Comm. Seymour Schoenfeld presents in brief form what one racial group has done and is now doing in defense of the rights of man and of righteousness.

The author gives us a historical sketch of what the Negro as a soldier has contributed to the well-being of this country. In spite of countless handicaps, the Negro has caused himself to be recognized as an important element in the American struggle against all forms of injustice. In the War of Independence, the Civil War, the War of 1812, the Spanish-American War, and in the First and Second World Wars, he has been no insignificant factor, but, by serving and giving his life on land and sea, has proved himself loyal, brave, and trustworthy.

Seymour J. Schoenfeld is chiefly concerned with the attitude of a large part of the American public toward the American Negro soldier in the present war. This country is supposedly fighting against the spirit of fascism, one of the worst evils and most dreadful blots on the face of the earth.

Yet while young men are suffering and dying to destroy fascism in its European and Asiatic strongholds, that same spirit is here being cultivated by great numbers of people in certain sections of this country. The fanatics display the ugliest sort of racial hatred and discrimination towards the Negro soldier. In many parts of the South, even his uniform is no protection against violence and murder; and those who who are guilty of such crimes allege for themselves the greatest patriotism! As Colonel Evans F. Carlson, of the United States Marine Corps, says in this book, "Racial intolerance is an element of fascism."

The author asks for better understanding, implemented by a further study of those fields affecting the life of the Negro here in the United States: economics, education, justice and politics. Such understanding looks toward a more complete integration of the Negro as a full citizen, not as a second- or third-class inhabitant, barely tolerated if at all. Schoenfeld writes as a man who, taking an active part in the present war, has had opportunity to come in close contact with all sorts, conditions and races of men, thus enabling him to form his own opinions and make his own unprejudiced judgments. He therefore logically and inevitably advocates the elimination of injustice based solely on racial grounds, whether on the part of the War Department, the State Department, or of the Red Cross. For example, he writes: "The attempt of the Red Cross to create the impression that blood plasma remains segregated only complicates the entire problem, and wastes time, materials and effort, when we are all urged by the Government to avoid such waste." He also condemns in harsh, well-merited terms the "export of racial theories" to other lands and peoples.

A great deal of excellent material has been compressed into "The Negro and the Armed Forces." Brief though it is, it is a splendid contribution to our literature on this current war. In my opinion, it is far more valuable than many books that sell for three or four times the price. In the words of Henry A. Wallace, "It is the duty of everyone who believes in the Declaration of Independence to read this book."

The author tells the story of the return of an air force veteran and his journey home from Miami to New York by train in company with an isolatonist senator ,a light-fingered horse-player, a tragic young widow, a sailor's wife with two small children, an industralist who is inconvenienced by the war, an overworked doctor, and one Nina Glimore. "Journey Home" is a human story written with compassionate understanding and with corrosive acid.

Causes of strikes, prevention of strikes, whether unions should be regulated, the closed shop, picketing, the Negro in industry, and women workers are the topics discussed and answered in James Myers' "Do You Know Labor?"

Information of how clubs are organized, how meeting are conducted, constitution and by-laws, duties and qualifications of officers, parliamentary procedure, elections, committees, programs, and how new clubs are started may be found in the "Club Member's Handbook," by L. R. Milligan.

Edited by Harry E. Maule "Great Tales of the American West" contains stories by such authors as Bret Harte, Mark Twain, Owen Wister, Stewart White, Zane Grey, William MacLeod Raine, W. C. Tuttle, and others.

Of interest to everyone who wants to know why people say and so what they do is "Psychiatry For The Curious" by George H. Preston. Not only has the author penned a satisfying book on the subject of psychiatry, but the book also offers sound and helpful advice.

"How to Live Beyond Your Means" by Margery Wilson offers the opportunity to learn how to get the most out of living, to squeeze significance and happiness out of every moment and hour, out of everything which happens in our daily existence.

D. A. Laird sets forth eleven simple but useful rules which make relations with employees more pleasant and fruitful in his "The Technique of Handling People."

How to turn half-living into full time enjoyment, how to become a participant and not an onlooker, the meaning and necessity of fun and how to obtain in, how to use routine activity, solitude, and hobbies, how leisure differs from slowness, and how to widen your horizons are related by Sidney Greenbie in his "Leisure For Living."

Veterans Story Leads New Books On Circulation At Public Library

Newport News, Va. Press

With millions of veterans to return home in the coming months, Zelda Popkin's timely "The Journey Home" heads the list of new books now on circulation at the Newport News public library.

Two New Novels About the Negro People

N.Y.N.Y. Daily Worker 4-26-45

By BERNICE CAREY

There are two new novels which fasten a distressed eye on the unfavorable plight of the American Negro. Neither will go down in history as deathless literature, but both are competently written and socially progressive. The fact that so many publishers feel there is a market for expressions of displeasure over injustice and race prejudice is a symptom that American public opinion is moving toward sweeping over and obliterating the forces which uphold oppression of minorities within our nation.

* * *

In some ways Winds Blow Gently by Ronald Kirkbride (Frederick Fell, $2.50), is only incidentally concerned with the problems of Negroes. It is a story of a Quaker family who move from Pennsylvania to a plantation in South Carolina during the 1920's, finding upon arrival at their "farm" that they have not only bought the land and buildings, but, to all intents and purposes, a small colony of Negro farm lands.

The story is told in the first person through the eyes of David Jordan, the young son of the family; and it is a sensitive chronicle of a boy's emotional growth as he moves through adolescence, as well as a fine presentation of Quaker ways and beliefs.

The Jordans, by religion and by innate common sense, look upon the Negroes they find on their farm as human beings rather than agricultural tools. Mr. Jordan starts right out by paying them living wages and setting up a school for his employes, since the Negro school house has "mysteriously" burned down.

REACTION 4-26-45

He further affronts local opinion by refusing to submit to cotton as king, and going in for diversified farming which enables him to make enough profit on the land to pay higher wages than the surrounding farmers who refuse to consider planting anything but cotton.

Inevitably the Jordans incur the fury of the Ku Klux Klan, and tragedy results both for the Quaker family and the leading members of the Negro community. This sort of ending probably sounds like a pretty stereotyped pattern in the field of the Southern novel. The reason the violent climax recurs so often in honest fiction about the South is that it has been so horribly true to life.

"Winds, Blow Gently," however, s not a welter of unmitigated tragedy. There is romance and humor and charming descriptions both of natural scenes and of the home activities of a likeable American family. And there is an optimistic note in the fact that the Jordans earn the respect and cooperation of one of the most powerful land-holders of the community; and by example, and as a result of their own final tragic experiences, new forces of progress are set in motion, leading to better conditions than the Jordans found when they came to this South Carolina community. 4-26-45

Before I read Swing Low by Edwin A. Peeples (Houghton Nifflin $2.50). I heard various rumblings to the effect that it was "chauvinistic." I cannot quite go along with that estimate. Certainly it is not exactly positive in tone; for it ends in retreat and defeat.

The time is pre-war, which accounts for much of the gloom of the picture presented. The forces of progress were limping pretty badly in the late thirties, and as far as the poorest Negro section of Atlanta, Georgia was concerned, according to this story, they might as well have been completely dead.

The hero, Willy Mack, is an unsophisticated, decent-minded country Negro whose wife bullies him into trying his luck in the city. In Billiard Hollow in Atlanta, they experience hunger, cold, violence, frustration, injustice and constant, corroding fear.

The villain of the piece is a depraved white character, Hadley, who preys on the poverty-stricken Negro community. Willy Mack's boss is a decent white man who hates the conditions under which his employees have to live and who induces Willy Mack to bring Hadley into court on charges of assault and robbery. The travesty of Southern justice when applied to the black citizen is eloquently exposed in this sequence.

Finally, beaten and hopeless as far as making a go of it in the city is concerned, Willy Mack and Amy go back to the farm. 4-26-45

What gives the book its value is that the author is obviously outraged at a society which condemns human beings to subhuman living standards and their attendant products of crime and hopelessness, and then sits on the lid and tries to keep them from getting out of the cage of poverty and ignorance to which they have been confined.

The charge of "chauvinism" probably arises from the fact that Negroes are shown engaging in all kinds of vicious activities from prostitution, through boot-legging, to slashing at each other with razors. 4-26-45

The only drawback I find about "Swing Low" is that some of the more prejudiced and slower-witted members of our population might read into it confirmation of the false conception that Negro people are "just naturally" child-like and undisciplined in their approach to life, despite the fact that this is not at all what the author means, nor what the intelligent person will deduce from the story.

BILLIARD ALLEY Ala.

SWING LOW, by Edwain A. Peeples. Published by Houghton Mifflin Company; 293 pages, $2.50. Birmingham News

This book gives us the Negro upon the level and in the setting where most of us place him.

It does not sentimentalize, it does not gloss over. It tells quite honestly and frankly about the conditions which make city Negroes such a problem. And it places the responsibility for these conditions where it belongs—upon the whites, who are either too indifferent or too prejudiced to realize that they have had so much to do with making the Negro what he is. Mr. Peeples, who is a Georgian of the "briar patch" variety, who knows his Atlanta thoroughly, and who writes with utter realism, gives us a picture of the Negro community in that city which can be duplicated in a host of other Southern cities. This is an indictment which is all the more telling because it comes not from an outsider, but from one of us, whose courage is only equalled by his insight.

Willy Mack is a country Negro who would never have come to town but for the insistence of his wife, Amy, who yearns for the city. "He liked it on the farm. He liked to chop cotton and plant corn and hoe potatoes. He liked the smell of a mule in the sun." He liked the dust of the field, the briars, the mint, the cane, the creeks. He was at home in South Georgia. He ate well. His boss was good to him. He had no money, but what does money mean if a man can without it "live good" without it? But his wife, who had lived in Atlanta, yearned for its joys, and opportunities. So Willy and Amy moved to Atlanta.

They moved to Billiard Alley, a fetid but typical spot in the Negro district, and there Willy's troubles began. Living good was impossible there. Willy was in the midst of poverty, violence and evil. There was no protection of the law in Billiard Alley. Throats were slashed, wives beaten, innumerable offenses committed, outside the knowledge of the police. "It makes life more a misery and a trial than it is if us gits mixed up in the courts," says one of Willy's friends. Besides, the police have their own way of enforcing the law. They break down doors without asking for admittance. They accept the evidence of any white man, however depraved, against that of any Negro, however decent. 4-28-45

So here was Willy contrasting the foul surroundings of his new life with what he had known—comparing the shacks and filth and smell of Billiard Alley with the clean earthiness of the countryside. He began to plan how he could preserve his self-respect in Billiard Alley. He wanted to grow things, he wanted to improve his dwelling, he wanted a bed and a cookstove. And he went about getting these improvements, even though he had to borrow from a usurer charging $1.50 for a loan of $10. And he got a good job, and kept it, and everything was going well until Amy, who could not stand prosperity, bought an automobile, only to have it wrecked and then to see Willy's wages garnisheed by the installment people. 4-28-45

The sky caved in for the Willy Macks. What was the use of working when someone else grabbed your wages? But if you earned no wages, you could not pay the rent. Something had to be done. Amy was too smart for herself. She tried bootlegging, and had her brush with the police. Even Amy saw the desirability of getting away from Billiard Alley. She agreed to go back to the farm—exactly what her husband had been urging. And the story ends with Willy returning to Hogansville, to the renewed satisfaction of being where there was a reason for living, where a man didn't feel tired, where the ground smells good, and the air is fresh and there's plenty of cornpone and greens and eggs and milk, not to mention "the smell of a mule and of hay in the sun."

This is Peeples' first novel, and it is a grand piece of work. It is not propaganda, it is just a very persuasive picture of a Negro, neither intellectual nor articulate, who wants to be comfortable, free and happy, and who finds that "these are dangerous things for a Negro to want." It has a moral which no discerning, sensitive Southerner can miss. Willy's mother put it this way: "It ain't never gonna get no better till the white folks takes the time to see what us colored folks need. Us needs the help of the law. And us needs learning."—E. L. O.

Article in Journal

Afro-American 3-10-45

MISS MILDRED JENKINS, soprano, whose article "The Impact of African Music Upon the Western Hemisphere" is published in the winter number of the Journal of Negro Education. The article is an abstract of her thesis for the master of arts degree from Boston University where she is working on her doctor of philosophy degree in the psychology of music. In private life she is Mrs. Alfred Haughton, wife of the editor of the Boston Chronicle. 3-10-45

Author Of 'Inside' Books Here To Examine Alabama's Interior

Montgomery Advertiser
4-27-45 Ala.

By RAY GOULD

Stopping over in Montgomery for a few days on his sweep over the country, John Gunther, widely known foreign correspondent and author of the famous "Inside" books, left this morning to resume his tour after visiting Gov. Sparks and many points of interest in this section of Alabama. His new book, now in preparation, is to be entitled "Inside U. S. A." and will include a section on Alabama. It will be the fourth in the series which have sold 1,500,000 copies. "Inside South America," "Inside Europe," and "Inside Asia," have all three been Book-of-the-Month choices, none has gone into inexpensive editions, all have been translated into several languages.

John Gunther

The 43-year-old cosmopolitan and world traveler has a keen sense of humor for he only laughed when questioned on his reaction to his latest work, the novel, "The Troubled Midnight." It received much high praise and much criticism throughout the country from reviewers, nine out of ten exclaiming over it as John Gunther's first novel when, in reality, he was famous for his novels long before he wrote the "Inside" books. 4-27-45

The New York Times negro reviewer, William Du Bois, wrote that the noval was "his first flier in fiction," and that it "is a rather grotesque failure." He also wrote that the characters were "infected with all the occupational diseases of the amateur novelist." But John Gunther's brilliant style as a novelist reached a high level as far back as 1928 when "The Golden Fleece" was published. Prior to that he had written and published "Red Pavilion," "Eden For One," and others. 4-27-45

As correspondent for NBC, Mr. Gunther visited 17 European countries on the eve of World War II. His views on present conditions are most interesting. He is greatly impressed with President Truman whom he visited a few weeks ago. Ridiculing reports that Hitler is not now running the Nazis he feels that the war with Germany is about over, and that it will take another year to finish the war against Japan.

Gunther's tour of the 48 States is really just beginning as he still has 34 more to go. His book is not scheduled for publication until 1946. He is especially interested in the increasingly liberal viewpoint of the South and its leaders, and is attempting to find just what makes the clock tick. As a veteran political observer he is tremendously interested in what makes for political power.

From Alabama this modern "soldier of fortune" will delve into the "inside" working of South Carolina. The intelligent, sophisticated traveler has already completed his library research for his new book and he admits that his work on "Inside U. S. A." is much more difficult than the other countries he has written of.

Ben Burns Off The Book Shelf

Chicago Defender
Chicago, Ill.

Novels: Good and Bad

IN THE EXCESS of stodgy novels that too often clutter up the books stalls these prosperous publishing days, occasionally there drifts by a really fresh, sprightly work like Ronald Kirkbride's new "Winds, Blow Gently" (Frederick Fell, Inc., N.Y. $2.50). Minus the usual over-loud trumpets of praise from book clubs and book experts, "Winds, Blow Gently" adds up to one of the best novels that has hit the book market this year. 4-14-45

With remarkable restraint and simplicity, Kirkbride tells the story of a Quaker family which went South and tried to practice the tenets of kindness and humanity in the land of hate. He has turned out a study in bold contrasts, a stirring and distinguished tale that turns a searing spotlight on the South.

Writing the first person, Kirkbride tells of the efforts of a Quaker farmer to live up to his faith and how the Ku Klux Klan finally wreaked its vengeance on him because he proved he was right in his intelligent handling of his Negro help. In no sense a "race book," this work is more an expose of the stubborn stupidity of the South in resisting progress. It is stirring reading throughout.

Tea and Crumpets School

IN CONTRAST to this excellent work is the much-publicized but far inferior "The Ballad And The Source" (Reynal & Hitchcock, N. Y. $2.75) which is the April selection of the Book-Of-The-Month club. Written by the popular British author, Rosamond Lehmann, this is supposed to be one of those stealthy "Suspicion" stories for which the British and Alfred Hitchcock are so justly famous.

Certainly Miss Lehmann has done a clever and apt job in building up one of those psychological characters that so intrigue movie-goers. She has written a horror story of a sort. But essentially she has also produced a downright boring book.

Overburdened with droning monologues and effusive literary ambling, "The Ballad And The Source" becomes annoyingly overwritten and trying on the reader's patience with its tale of the omnipresent Sybil Jardine, the villian of this piece. In many ways it represents the acme in the tea and crumpets school of literature which furnishes discussion material for ladies' literary societies. It should make a good antidote to these ladies for last month's Book-Of-The Month, Richard Wright's "Black Boy." 4-14-45

Literary Sad Sack

FOR THE THIRD NOVEL on this week's "little list," Dorsha Hayes has dished up a bit of anti-Semitic, anti-union drivel in a nasty, uninhibited tome, "Who Walk With The Earth" (Harper & Bros., N.Y. $2.50). Aside from being shabby, amateurish writing that drags out every bit of melodrama technique ever used in "East Lynn," this literary sad sack stoops to some of the most virulent, unabashed union-baiting ever passed off as a novel.

And of course, Mrs. Hayes will say that some of her best friends are Jews in answer to the label of "anti-Semitic" on her "Who Walk With The Earth." But her story of a foul-mouthed, dictatorial, crass Jewish union boss, a gent named Blotz, who tilts with a naive, simon-pure Aryan Harvard hero, Stuart Greene, cannot escape the anti-Jewish designation. The pages of her book dote constantly in Hitlerian fashion on so-called Jewish characteristics and leave a bitter taste.

Perhaps it is fortunate that her novel is so stilted and stupidly conceived that it will probably get little attention. As the story of the fight of rank and file union members to oust a Petrillo-like labor faker, it falls flat and fails to be convincing. As a novel it is a worthy nominee for oblivion.

BOOK OUT SOON

Chicago Defender
(Ill.)

GWENDOLYN BROOKS

Well known Chicago poet whose book of ballads, blues and portraits-in-verse, "A Street In Bronzeville," will be published by Harper and Brothers August 15. The young poet who is Mrs. Henry Blakely in private life, has had numerous works published in magazines, is now at work on a novel. Her verse has received high praise from such writers as Richard Wright and William Rose Benet. 8-18-45

11- 1945

VIEWS and Reviews

Pittsburgh Courier Pa.

By GEORGE S. SCHUYLER

1-27-45

(This column represents the personal opinion of Mr. Schuyler and in no way reflects the editorial opinion of The Pittsburgh Courier.—The Editors)

One of the most significant publications recently issued is "Benefits and Opportunities for Colored Citizens of Memphis." Profusely illustrated and excellently printed on heavy coated paper, this 40-page booklet is something unique. Other Southern cities may have printed similar booklets, but I have not seen or heard of them. This publication is significant because it indicates a new attitude on the part of Southern civic officials. It is not unusual for cities to boast of their assets and opportunities, and in the past, chambers of commerce have vied with each other in extolling the virtues of their respective communities. But, it is certainly unusual for a Southern city to boast in print of what it is doing for its colored citizens in an obvious effort to enlist their interest, increase their local patriotism and discourage them from migrating. It is hopeful to see white officials concerned about what colored citizens think of their home town.

* * *

Beginning with a brief foreword by the Mayor, in which Abraham Lincoln is quoted on the functions of Government and the need for civic pride, the booklet plunges immediately into a graphic description of what Memphis has to offer colored people. We are told about the health services, such as the Wellington Health Center, "operated entirely for and by Negroes," the Douglas and Manassas Health Centers, numerous clinics, the 49 Negro health workers, the house-to-house inspections by three Negro sanitarians, the tax-supported John Gaston Hospital, which cost $800,000 and is free, with Negro patients outnumbering whites in three of the four wards, having skillful and expert attention.

The booklet boasts of the city's facilities for dental care, venereal disease control and tuberculosis control.. It shows how the Negro death rate per 1,000 was reduced from 20.0 in 1933 to 13.9 in 1943; tuberculosis death rate per 100,000 from 264.1 to 121.0 during the same period; and infant death rate under one year per 1,000 live births from 123.5 to 67.8. It tells of its Gailor Psychiatric Hospital opened in 1942, with 50 per cent of the beds assigned to Negroes, and its Oakville Memorial Sanatorium, where 18 beds are available for tuberculosis patients of the Negro race "who enjoy the same facilities offered the whites," and Shelby County Hospital, where "The colored ward . . . has a colored staff" serving 274 of the 481 patients. There is a beautiful photograph of each of these institutions.

1-27-45

A page is devoted to the T. O. Fuller Memorial Museum on which work will soon begin pending priorities. It will be a museum of Negro history and a branch library in memory of "a distinguished Negro minister, teacher, lawmaker and humanitarium," with a colored committee in charge.

Much space, including many fine pictures, is devoted to educational facilities, with the triumphant gloat that "Every Negro school child in Memphis is housed in a modern, sanitary fireproof building" except for three small one-story units. It is stated that the "value of Negro school property has increased from $1,308.175.65 to $2,757,431.46" in the past ten years, that playground acreage has doubled, and a high school stadium built at a cost of $83,000, with lights for night games and seats for 3,000 people. Some 54 per cent of the colored teachers are college graduates, and in the high school, all except one, are. Textbooks are furnished free through the eighth grade. Graduates of the high school "are admitted to standard colleges without examination." Close attention is given to child health and nutrition.

1-27-45

There is much more in the same tone about housing, recreation in the 11 Negro parks with statistics on acreage, facilities and attendance; the Juvenile Court, and the operations of the Memphis Welfare Commission. It is asserted that 1,121 of the 2,520 city employees are colored; that colored folk have "a special day set apart each week in which they have the exclusive privilege of the Memphis Zoo"; that they can use the Fair Grounds free for the colored fair, and that the Municipal Auditorium is open to them "for conventions, ceremonies, entertainment, performances, etc."

In conclusion it is stated that "Public officials of Memphis and Shelby County have striven, and will continue to strive, to meet the needs, improve the living conditions, and advance the opportunities of the colored people who live in this community."

* * *

Of course there are many gaps in this flowery account. Nothing is said about colored policemen, firemen, clerks in municipal offices, judges and many other topics, for obvious reasons. Nevertheless, the booklet is significant as a new departure in race relations. Undoubtedly there are many other Southern cities with as much or more to boast about in connection with facilities for Negro citizens, but so far, they have refrained from putting it in print. For doing so, the City Fathers of Memphis deserve a hand. I know there is vast room for improvement in Memphis, but this booklet is commendable as an indication of an extraordinarily high degree of civic responsibility which augurs well for the future.

Bibliography

'Africans Are People'

Daily Worker

By ESLANDA GOODE ROBESON

An excerpt from Mrs. Robeson's forthcoming book **African Journey.** (John Day, August.)

7-19-45

Today the question of Africa is even more interesting, exciting and pressing than heretofore. Africa has at long last come into focus in world thinking. The interest and attention of the world are now, reluctantly, directed toward that great continent. The North African Campaign was crucial in this war. That's where we got our toehold in this present march to victory. Vitally important supply bases, repair bases, airfields are in Africa. Critical raw materials—rubber, essential alloys used in making steel, palm oil, cotton, cocoa, radium come from Africa. The Free French were given new life, hope and impetus because of the loyalty, courage, and political astuteness of Felix Eboue, the black Governor of the Chad Region, in French Equatorial Africa. International airdromes have been established at strategic points in North, West, Central and East Africa. Dakar, Cairo, Brazzaville are known to millions of the newspaper, radio and film public.

Until this war, the only people who were even vaguely aware of Africans as human beings were Missionaries, tourists, businessmen, government officials and politicians—with few exceptions—considered the Africans (if they considered them at all) as savages, labor fodder, and pawns.

This war has changed all that. The people of the world, in fighting for their own freedom, have come at long last to sense that no man can be free until all men are free.

Many people try to avoid facing this reality; many people are facing it reluctantly.

But Hitler, in his insistence upon the superiority of the few, his few, over the many, in his ruthless enslavement of some peoples and the extermination of others, has shown clearly that race inferiority, tolerated so complacently yesterday because it meant the non-white, today comes out to mean the non-Aryan, the non-Nazi; that slavery so complacently tolerated yesterday because it meant the African, the Negro, comes out today to mean all the conquered peoples.

When an aroused world, at last determined not to continue to waste its wealth and manpower in periodic destructive wars, carefully considers the securing of a permanent peace, realistic statesmen will have to consider seriously the freedom of peoples.

7-19-45

Eslanda Goode Robeson (Mrs. Paul Robeson), author of African Journey.

Millions of soldiers (including Africans and Negroes) have been fighting in remote places of the earth for Democracy and the Four Freedoms—for themselves, and for their people.

Since these millions are men of all nations, all colors, all creeds, they are fighting for Democracy and the Four Freedoms for all the peoples of the world.

Many of these soldiers have, alas, died for this high goal.

I believe there will never be peace in the world until people achieve what they have fought and died for.

Africans are people.

SPRINGFIELD, MASS.
UNION-REPUBLICAN
Cir. S. 65,063

JUL 29 1945

Our Negro Fighting Men

"The Negro in the Armed Forces," by Lieut-Comdr Seymour J. Schoenfeld, United States naval reserve (Associated Publishers; $1.10), is a small pocket-size book presenting a brief history of the part played by Negro soldiers and sailors in all the wars in which this country has been involved. With this study it develops a documented case designed to prove the falsity of stereotyped racial prejudices. It stresses the subversive influence of such prejudices in practice as elements of weakness that tend to prevent a thoroughgoing and vigorous prosecution of the war. To counteract any such trend, the book argues need of further progress toward complete integration of the Negro in the armed forces. Wholeheartedly commending this purpose, Secretary of Commerce Henry A. Wallace says: "It is the duty of everyone who believes in the Declaration of Independence to read this book."

The Negro's flight north and a plea for action

THEY SEEK A CITY, by Arna Bontemps and Jack Conroy (Doubleday, Doran, $2.75).

By Owen Dodson

THE authors of *They Seek a City* tell many stories that have a double theme—the flight of black men from fear to freedom, the flight of black men from fear to so great a disillusion that they became more afraid than they were.

Only after you have read the last line of the book do you see the picture whole. What emerges from the acid is a kind of last stand in the black minority's struggle to escape a life in a South spiked with lynchings and Jim Crow, poll tax, sharecropping and subtle terrors. In spite of the violence that ran—and still runs—up and down the roads and through the cities, the migrants move, filled always with the kind of faith and hope that adds meaning and flesh and shelter to the poverty of opportunity which Negroes ironically enjoy in our democracy.

This book could be divided into the truth and consequences of three types of migration: the migrations accomplished principally through the Underground Railroad in the days of slavery, the atypical, personal migrations that were more spiritual than physical, and the great northward and westward migrations that occurred during World Wars I and II.

Those who got a head start

The Underground Railroad, one of the most fascinating and courageous chapters in American history, was responsible for the escape of many Negroes who got a head start on those to be freed later. Moreover, these riders on the invisible trains to freedom in the North and in Canada represent the first settlement of a large number of Negroes above the Mason-Dixon line.

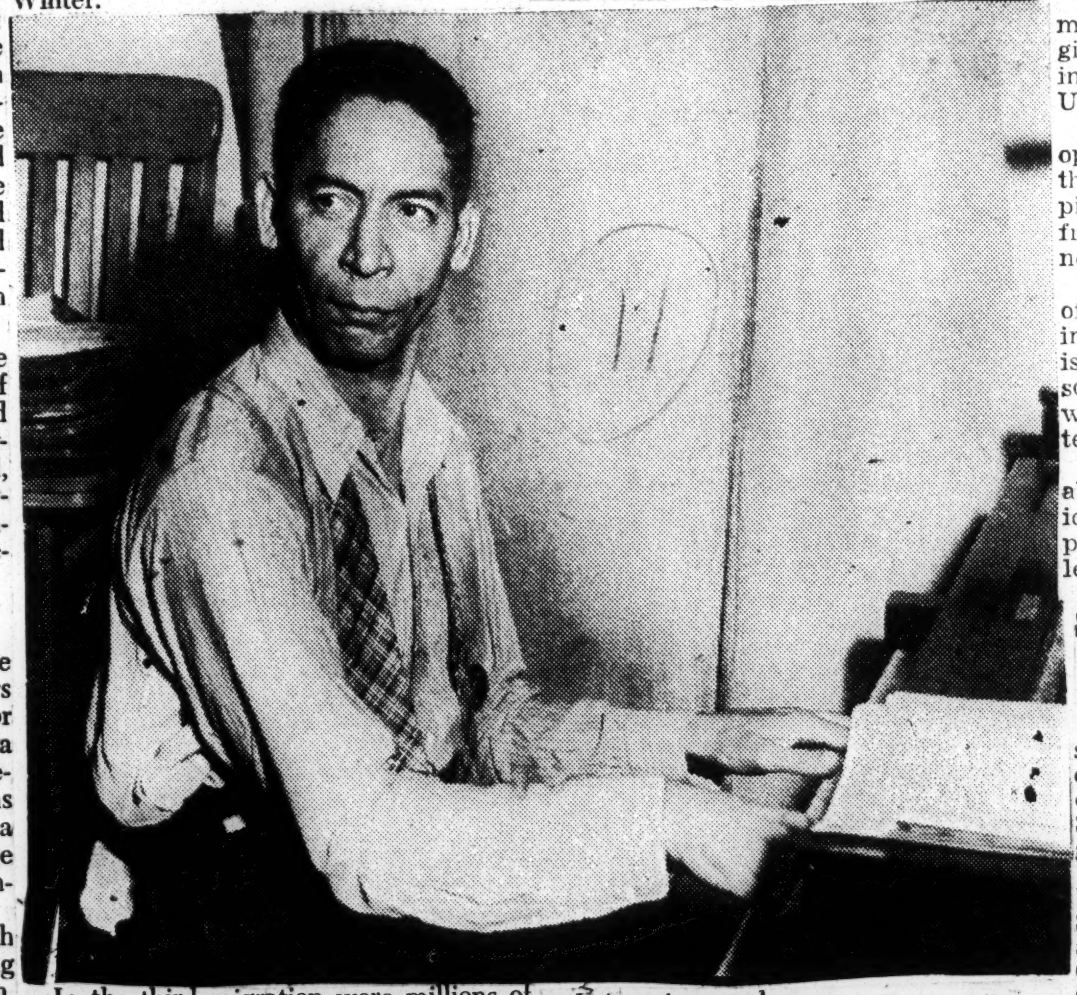
Well-known conductors move through these pages with sharp and gratifying effectiveness—figures like Harriet Tubman, the Moses of her people, who started hundreds through the wilderness of danger to freedom, and Frederick Douglass, the Abolitionist, together with lesser-known men like William Still and Allan Pinkerton (who became Abraham Lincoln's bodyguard) and John Jones, the friend and helper of John Brown.

Perhaps the chapters that make the freshest reading are those that include stories of the second migration—of black men and women who contributed to the cultural pattern of America, men and women who fled North, but had within them a restless Ariel spirit that cried out for more than shelter and daily bread, that cried out for inner freedom and peace.

Among them were Paul Laurence Dunbar, who died at 36 from the disease of being hermetically sealed in prejudice but who left a body of poetry that is significant today, and Robert S. Abbot, the founder of the Chicago *Defender*, the militant Negro weekly.

Fantastic but zealous

Among them also are Scott Joplin, the "king of ragtime, who provided mood music for the great migrations of Negroes from the South at the turn of the century," and Jelly-Roll Morton from New Orleans, who played the piano "to exert power," and the little-known Buddy Bolden, who would put his golden trumpet through a hole in a fence and play sweetly, nostalgically "calling his children home" in spirit when they were lonely in the northern Winter.



In the third migration were millions of Negroes, "sick to get out of the South," who left to work at war jobs in the North during World War I. And now, in our time, millions more have left and keep on coming, seeking freedom and tolerance.

In the chapters headed ironically *Detroit: Arsenal of Democracy* and *With Brotherly Love*, Arna Bontemps and Jack Conroy give a brilliant analytical exposition of the origins and meanings of the recent Detroit riots and the transportation disturbances in Philadelphia and the resulting plans for organized racial understanding through committees like the American Council on Race Relations.

There are a hundred novels, and just as many plays, lying fallow in these pages. Much of the material is extraneous to the main stream of the book, but it is never dull. Although their source material is authentic and exhaustive, the authors have presented their study in human rather than statistical terms. And, despite the fact that they are dealing with one of the most serious problems in America, their book is not lacking in humor. Writing with restraint and often with eloquence, they have dug into a soil that is fertile with folklore and poetry.

The book closes with a question which is also a warning: Where will the new frontiers be if the North becomes a more subtle South where the patterns of segregation are less organized but just as potent? Now the problem must be faced. Now, before riots and disillusion come again to make black and white millions neurotic and America weak.

DENVER, COLO.
Rocky Mountain News
Cir. D. 41,799 — S. 44,645

7-1-45

A Negro Patriarch Propounds

In **"Riots and Ruins"** by A. Clayton Powell Sr. (Richard R. Smith, $2), the patriarch of the Negro pulpit, founder and pastor emeritus of New York's Abyssinian Baptist Church and father of the first Negro to be elected to Congress from an Eastern district, gives facts and opinions on the race problem.

Fortunately, Mr. Powell does not minimize or apologize. He dismisses Negroes who do either as ("Uncle Toms.") He is deeply indignant at the injustice that has been and is being done his fellow Americans and is apprehensive about the future unless the issue is fully met.

Sample passages:

"Everywhere in Detroit you hear the ominous echo of the immortal words of Patrick Henry—'Give me liberty or give me death!' The echo is becoming louder throughout the United States. The only way to stop it is to treat Negroes as human beings and as American citizens.

"All the Negro wants or deserves is the same chance the white man has. Whatever the Constitution, or the Bill of Rights, or custom gives the white man, the Negro wants the same, nothing less, nothing more. When this is granted the race problem will be solved. Until this is done, there are going to be riots, ruin and hell.

"If the Negro fails to make good after being given equality of opportunity, let him go down in American history as a serf and a third-class citizen. The Negro does not want any special privileges, pitying or coddling. He only wants the door of opportunity left open from Maine to Mississippi and if does not make the goal he will have no one to blame but himself."

"The Negro does not believe in social equality. There are plenty of Negroes and whites that many Negroes would not invite to sleep in, eat in or visit their homes. When the Negro asks for equality he is not asking for social equality. It cannot be repeated too often that social equality is not a race but an individual question. No race, white or black, no government, state or national, has any right to interfere with whom I associate.

"The Negro means by equality what this author has advocated all his life and through this book—an equal chance with other Americans to live, to work, to educate himself and his children, to read in public-supported libraries, to live and travel anywhere his desires lead and his money permits."

No American should ask more. No American should accept less.

South Prepares Book On Social Problems

The Montgomery Advertiser
Montgomery Alabama 8-12-45

ATLANTA, (AP)—A book on southern health, housing and racial relations is being prepared for circulation in the schools of the South. It is written at the seventh grade reading level.

The project is being carried out by the Advisory Committee on Southern Resources in Education, and sponsored by the American Council of Education, Peabody College in Nashville, and the University of North Carolina.

John Ivey, a member of the committee, said the purpose of the project is "not only to instill regional pride, but to teach people how they can improve their way of life. We want the people of the South, the average man and woman, to do something about the poverty, the poor health, the poor housing, and the poor relations between one another."

11- 1945

Bibliography

A Black, A Briton, A Boer

Time Time

AGAINST THESE THREE—*Stuart Cloete* —*Houghton Mifflin* ($3.50).

The Matabele, a savage offshoot of the Zulu tribe, named their warrior king Lobengula ("He Who Drives Like the Wind"). But by 1880 the fat, short-winded monarch preferred to lie on his bed toying with the stolen diamonds he kept in a couple of kerosene cans, while his wives covered his naked body with gold sovereigns. Time M. Mag.

Lobengula was a conservative man who liked the old ways best: "making rain" out of goats' entrails, gossiping with his witch doctors, snuffing the air in the royal courtyard, where his dogs gnawed rotting carcasses (of animals, mostly). Sometimes he climbed into his throne (a wheel chair) and dispensed judgment in the good old Matabele way—flinging to the crocodiles a slave who had sipped the royal beer, or impaling an unfaithful wife. He had "a benignant smile" and was popular with his people. 7-23-45

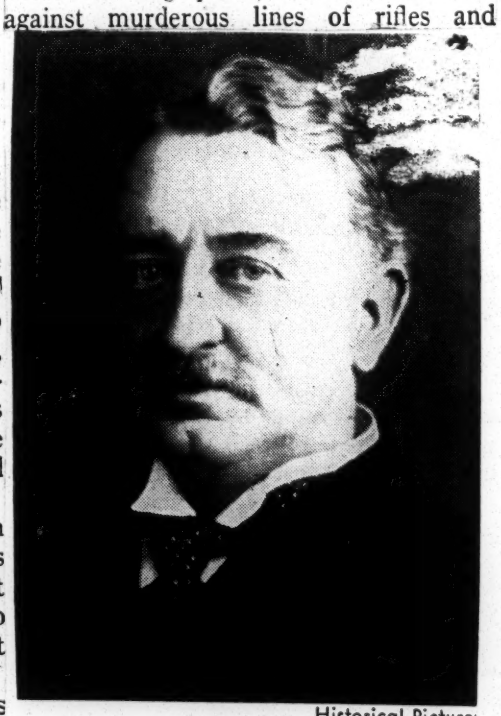
But in the country south of Matabeleland, the old forms were dying fast. The inhabitants of the two principal white territories (Britain's Cape Colony and the independent South African Republic of Dutch-descended Boer farmers) were no longer surrounded by wild Hottentots, Zulus, Bastaards and Griquas. The country was yielding to an influx of foreigners who made treaties with the tribes, drove them into subjection, renamed the old lands, established new laws.

What brought the foreigners to South Africa was the discovery of the world's richest diamond and gold fields. What the new men and the new mines meant to South Africa is the theme of Stuart Cloete's book.

Author Cloete (pronounced clooty) is best known as South Africa's expatriate novelist (*The Turning Wheels, The Hill of Doves*). But *Against These Three* is no romance; it is bitter truth and hard fact. As biography, it tells the life stories of three famous South Africans: Lobengula, last King of the Matabele; Stephanus Johannes Paulus ("Oom Paul") Kruger, last President of the South African Republic; Cecil John Rhodes, uncrowned king of the world of gold and diamonds. As history, it is a dramatic study of the beginnings of a long, drawn-out and bitter struggle for power over the last of the great open spaces.

Gifts & Signatures. Lobengula was the last South African native king to fight for his independence. He ruled a territory as large as Finland, bounded by the Zambezi and the Limpopo Rivers. But even in this large and lonely expanse of grassland he could feel the presence of Portuguese, Germans, British and Boers. These white people sent emissaries to his court bearing gifts of champagne, brandy and sovereigns. Afterwards, they always asked Lobengula if he would kindly sign a piece of paper called a "concession," which permitted them to dig in the ground like children, and to open little stores. Lobengula signed a few concessions; then he got nervous and wrote to ask Queen Victoria if it was a wise thing to do. "It is not wise," she replied, "to put too much power in the hands of the men who come first and to exclude other deserving men. . . ." Rather than reassuring Lobengula, this letter somehow made him more nervous than ever.

But he kept on signing concessions until the mounted police appeared in Matabeleland, "incidents" occurred and blood was shed. Finally the Matabele, armed with short stabbing-spears, hurled themselves against murderous lines of rifles and



Historical Picture

RHODES

Maxims. Lobengula wrote his last letter to Queen Victoria: "Your Majesty, what I want to know from you is: why do your people kill me?" Six months later, his bodyguard buried his exhausted, dropsy-wasted body.

"All Red!" The new territory was named Rhodesia, in honor of the man who had planned its conquest. Consumptive son of an English parson, Cecil John Rhodes had come to South Africa for his health, carrying nothing but a Greek lexicon. At first, he commuted between Oxford and Cape Town; he took his seat in the Cape Parliament after he graduated from Oriel College. In Kimberley he built De Beers & Co., history's largest diamond monopoly, and made himself the richest man in the world. But he continued to live in a tin shack and to dream of the uses to which his money might be put.

Tall and broad, with the heavy, prominent features and classical tastes of a Roman emperor, Rhodes also combined the characteristics of an Elizabethan freebooter, a financial tycoon, and a humorless, 20th-Century dictator. "I contend," he said, "that we are the finest race in the world and that the more of the world we inhabit the better it is for the human race." He would lay his big hand on a map of Africa, printed with the colors of many nations, and cry: "I want to see it all red, all red!" He envisioned an Anglo-North American empire that would rule the world: the now famed Rhodes Scholarships were established by him in the hope of training leaders of men. He sighed longingly when he stared up into the sky. "I would annex the planets if I could. I often think of that. It makes me sad to see them so clear and so far away." 7-23-45

Men idolized Rhodes, and Rhodes was fanatically loyal to his worshipers (he let the biggest gold deal of his life fall through by racing away to a dying friend). But with nonworshipers, he was utterly cynical. He named his riding horses after the men he had bribed; he "bought" the entire South African press ("There is no reason why one should not be properly reported"). When Irish Nationalist Charles Stewart Parnell complained that his divorce had made him unpopular with Roman Catholics, Rhodes exclaimed: "Can't you square the Pope?"

Rhodes acquired much of his fortune by making it fashionable for lovers to buy their sweethearts diamond engagement rings. He himself avoided women. "Is it true," asked Queen Victoria, "that you are a woman hater, Mr. Rhodes?" "How could I hate the sex to which Your Majesty belongs?" Rhodes replied.

Diamonds & Taxes. "This young man is going to give me trouble," said old President Kruger, who knew that, to Rhodes, the Boers' pastoral way of life was as much out of date as Lobengula's. The gulf between the tycoon and the farmer was too wide for bridging. Rhodes admitted to only "a 50% chance that God exists" (a square deal on Rhodes's part, says Author Cloete, since it gave neither God nor Rhodes the controlling interest). But Kruger lived by the Bible. Rhodes was celibate; Kruger had 16 children. Rhodes believed that the world was an egg for his omelette; Kruger believed it was flat—"with certain minor exceptions such as high mountains."

Kruger was a shrewd horse trader and a grasping man. But diamond-studded Kimberley and gold-booming Johannesburg (which lay in his own territory) horrified him. These mushroom cities swarmed with the world's adventurers, who swam in alcohol and commonly bid up to $100 (plus three cases of champagne) for one night with a prostitute. The invaders also overran the countryside, tapping the rocks with their greedy little prospector's hammers and dazzling the Boer farmers with sovereigns. 7-23-45

By 1895, foreigners on the Witwatersrand outnumbered Boers 85,000 to 65,000. They also owned half the land and nine-tenths of the assessable property. The more their power increased, the more President Kruger sought to milk them with taxes and curb them with limited franchise; the more he succeeded, the more vengeful they became. As one old Boer summed it up: "There are two riders but only one horse. . . . The question is which rider is going to sit in front."

Collapse of a Dream. Rhodes had no doubts on this point. In an ill-starred moment he financed and supported the famed "Jameson Raid," in which a band of armed adventurers invaded the South African Republic. The Raid failed miserably. But it shocked the world. For Rhodes, the failure of Jameson's Raid was a catastrophe. The British Government repudiated him; he resigned from the Cape

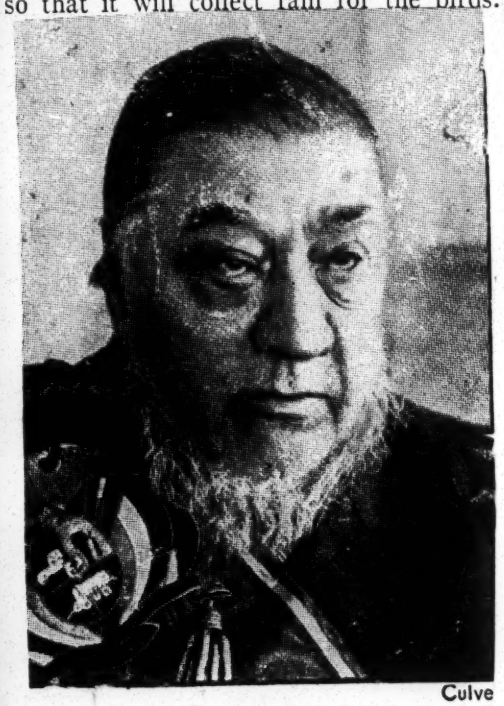
LOBENGULA (& A FAVORITE WIFE)

They still spell Africa.

Parliament, of which he was Prime Minister. His dream of all Africa as a British colony collapsed, and along with it his plans for a "secret society" of wealth and brains that would rule the world. When, in 1899, Anglo-Boer hatred flared up again into active warfare, Rhodes was a broken man. He died less than three years later. 7-23-45

Kruger led his handful of men against thousands of British regulars for six months, then made a desperate trip to Europe in search of aid. He died in Switzerland in 1904, and it was left to mere youths such as Smuts, Botha and Hertzog to build and shape today's Anglo-Boer Dominion of South Africa.

But Lobengula, Kruger, Rhodes—these three men are still Africa. A few miles from the site of the palace which was Lobengula's only monument stands one of the many statues of Rhodes, staring toward the north ("My hinterland," he called it). Kruger's frock-coated figure stands in dry, hot Pretoria: at his wife's request, the sculptor has left his top hat hollow, so that it will collect rain for the birds.



Culve

KRUGER

Charleston Courier

Books on Negroes Are Over-Drawn, S. C. Negro Says

It is seldom, if ever, that white readers have an opportunity presented to read reviews of current books on the negro race written by a negro reviewer familiar from childhood with the southern scene. In "The Open Door", for June, 1945, three such books are reviewed by a South Carolina negro, Jane E. Hunter, born at Pendleton, and now executive secretary, as she was original founder, of the Phillis Wheatley association, of Cleveland, Ohio.

The successful work she has done in that institution for the education, guidance and protection of the women of her race in a great northern community, has made her one of the foremost women of her race in the United States; and her accomplishment for educational, social and cultural welfare of young colored women in Cleveland and widely otherwhere won for her the distinguished service medal and certificate from the city of Cleveland.

Of three recent books she writes as follows:

"In recent years many books have been written concerning the life of the negro group by both white and colored authors. Many of these books contain cold-blooded facts of the actual living conditions and conduct of the colored people. Yet there is scarcely a book printed in which facts are not greatly overdrawn, to the discredit of negro leadership and of the institutions that train our youth. For example, "Strange Fruit", by Lillian Smith. This book is completely spoiled for me, as the author portrays a "beautiful college girl" seduced for the sexual satisfaction of a contemptible, low, trashy man of another race. The author places a stigma upon negro womanhood. The day has long passed when there is this clandestine mixing of the two groups: though of course we face the situation where ignorance still exists in America.

"Native Son," by Richard Wright, in my opinion, is over-drawn, and does much to destroy the pleasant memory of happy days which some of us have spent in the South. The experiences of Richard Wright in the South are commonly experienced in many Northern cities also. There is good and bad in all sections of the United States where ignorance is prevalent. As long as we endure ignorance we shall have racial tension and racial clashes.

"New World A-Coming", by Roi Ottley, while interestingly told, leaves, at the same time, a doubt in our minds of the seriousness of many negro leaders. When the reader considers that Mr. Ottley was educated in a foreign country, he realizes that the author's portrayal of the American negro's struggle for education, could not have been written with as deep feeling as by an American negro . . . . Mr. Ottley has not given justice to the great spiritual force which has been the background of our character-building program, and has helped the recognition of the negro as a commendable citizen . . . . the negro church, which was more or less founded by unlettered men and women; yet the spirit of genuine leadership dominated their efforts. It will be a happy day when future writers on negro life will in book-form tell the story of the upward fight of the colored people. It is a good thing that only a few negro children read these books, for in no reading this sort of novel children will not learn to hate a race, the majority of whom are their best friends. When the story of the negro's struggle, aspiration and achievement is told in full, the American people will take a different attitude towards helping him to provide greater opportunity for self-improvement."

Negro Problems: A Symposium

PRIMER FOR WHITE FOLKS. Edited by Bucklin Moon. 491 pp. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. $3.50.

By R. L. DUFFUS

Times

THIS collection was "conceived, not as a book for the expert in race relations but rather for the average American who is disturbed by the rising racial tension which he feels around him and by the paradox of white and Negro relationship in a democracy waging a war of liberation and equality." Americans are disturbed in different ways. For instance, one Southern legislator quoted in these pages thought democracy was "being betrayed at home by these anti-poll-tax agitators who are trying to destroy the principle of white supremacy." But we may take it that what bothers most good citizens, including numerous Southerners, is that the white man in this country says one thing and does another. North and South, in New York City as well as in Atlanta, the Negro does not have equality of opportunity.

The Negro is obviously and inevitably disturbed by this situation. He is the more disturbed because in so many ways he has made so much progress. It is not probable that he wishes to be asked to dinner by persons who don't like him. No one, white or black, wants that kind of "social equality." He does desire to be treated on his merits as a human being. But this book is not intended to make the Negro more worried or resentful than he is. It is meant to appeal to the conscience of white people. Many conscientious white people, in slavery times and later, have felt easy in their minds about the Negro because they have been able to convince themselves that he had as much freedom, or as much opportunity, as he could handle. They made of him "a stereotype and a legend." Mr. Moon has used his selections to break down the stereotype and legend and to show that the situation may be, as Lillian Smith has suggested, not "a Negro problem" but "actually a white problem."

NEARLY all the material is from modern sources. The collection might have been strengthened if it had included more background matter in the first section, which is labeled "Heritage." The present reviewer thinks of Olmsted's pre-Civil War "Journey in the Seaboard Slave States" and "Journey in the Back Country," and of Helper's "Impending Crisis," also published before the Civil War. There might even be something significant in "Uncle Tom's Cabin." But Dr. W. E. B. DuBois' masterly essay on "African Culture," Carey McWilliams' "The Negro Problem," the story of slave revolts taken from the Virginia Writers Project, Henrietta Buckmaster's rather consciously eloquent account of the abolition movement, and Muriel Rukeyser's narrative of the slave mutiny on the Amistad in 1839 do fill in the picture. They show at least that the Negro had a culture, a tradition and a constantly recurring resentment of slavery. Mutinies and revolts were few, but in folksongs, folk ways and the subdued talk in the slave quarters there was undoubtedly an unconquerable assertion of the Negro's manhood and rights as a human being.

The second part of the collection makes certain points in fictional form, under distinguished modern names. Some of these comments on "Black and White Mores" can be summarized in a sentence. Thus: Little black girls in the South can't play with little white girls—after a certain age. (Sarah Haardt.) The light-colored child has an advantage, especially when you are trying to please white folks. (Ted Poston.) A Negro boy and girl may be leaders in a "liberal" private school in New York City—but again, not after a certain age. (Tess Slesinger.) A Negro in New York City is surprised when a counterman in a restaurant treats him as though he were white. (Leonard Wallace Robinson.) People who patronize Negroes because they think they are picturesque or cute don't always get the effects they count on. (Langston Hughes.)

Also: A very light-colored Negro girl might seem attractive to a nice young white boy, but——. (Kay Boyle.) A Negro in Chicago has to be a hero to assert his right to swim on a public beach. (James T. Farrell.)

The "Ethics of Living Colored" is a tough lesson for a proud man to learn, if the proud man is a Negro. (Richard Wright.) Colored soldiers or civilians traveling in the South needn't expect too much. (Robert McLaughlin, Harold Garfinkel.) A Negro tenant may work forty years for a white landlord and then be arrested if he protests mildly when he is suddenly evicted. (Erskine Caldwell.)

The literary value of these pieces is not at stake in this discussion. It is the moral that counts, and the moral that runs through every story is that for the Negro this is not yet a free country. Is he ever going to find it a free country? The last section, "Today and Tomorrow," at least holds out hope. White men, North and South, have dared to speak against injustice. Black men have done the same, needing greater courage, but it may be that the white man's conscience can be stirred, in the mass, only by the white man's voice—or the white woman's. Wendell Willkie must have had a tremendous influence, and one not diminished by the fear of losing votes in a possible election. Will W. Alexander, Thomas Sancton and Lillian Smith are white Southerners who do not accept the prevailing "mores."

What it all adds up to is the fact that the Negro is deprived of the economic opportunity supposedly open to all citizens of this republic. He could stand the "social" slights if he had the economic opportunity—indeed, they might diminish of themselves. Since the primer is for "white folks," it isn't open to the objection that it will make the Negro think he is going to get his heart's desires sooner than will actually be the case. Injustice will not vanish overnight, especially when it is sanctified by folk ways; there is no danger that "white folks" will be educated too soon to the danger of a color caste system in a democracy.

11-1945 Bibliography

Capitalism And Slavery

Public Opinion 4-25-45

A Review

Of Dr. Eric Williams

BY

W. A. DOMINGO

The University of North Carolina Press. $3.

The volume consisting of 212 pages, exclusive of 57 pages of references, is a competent piece of research and scholarship. A compendium of information on the subject-matter, the book is an expansion of the doctorial thesis of the author. Only a trained historian with a logical mind, a knowledge of the principles of economic determinism, and an easy literary style, coul. have done as thorougha job without making the dissertation, on such a specialised subject, boring and heavy. 4-25-45

From his study of a vast number of documents, many of them original, and an intimate acquaintance with the writings of admitted authorities in the special fields of Capitalism and Slavery, Dr. Williams, a Trinidadian, who is now teaching Social and Political Science at Howard University, Washington, D.C., has been able to parade an imposing a ray of historical data and draw conclusions from them which throw a revealing light on the genesis and growth of European Capitalism as exemplified by rapid accumulation of wealth in England as a result of the Slave Trade itself and the the profits derived from the labour of black slaves in the West Indies.

Although a Negro, Dr. Williams does not handle his material with the sentimentality that might be expected of a descendant of those who suffered so that Europe, particularly England, became rich and powerful. The subject is treated with the utmost objectivity and because of this the arguments possess great strength and persuasiveness.

There is a wealth of documentation that is reminescent of German thoroughness in that respect, but there is none of the pedantry that mars so much of German scholarship. The book could hardly have appeared at a more opportune time. In Jamaica, for instance, there has been much controversy as to Jamaica' indebtness to England and vice versa.

Citing a large number of English authorities of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, Dr. Williams proves beyond cavil that the foundations of some of the greatest family fortunes of England developed out of the traffic in human flesh and from unrequited labour of the slaves. Statistics are produced by the author proving that but for the slave trade and and the West Indian sugar industry proud cities like London, Liverpool and Bristol, to mention only three, might have remained insignificant villages.

Considerable evidence is also adduced showing that the capital accumulated out of slavery was largely responsible for developing the cotton, wollen, iron and other industries of England, besides stimulating the foreign trade of England, generally, and financing the epoch-making inventions which caused the Industrial Revolution and and gave world supremacy to Great Britain.

An interesting and iconoclastic chapter of "Capitalism and Slavery" deals with the activities of the British Abolitionists. These persons are ironically termed the "Saints." The author mobilises a wealth of facts to prove that that Abolitionists, men like Wilberforce, were not the idealists and altruists popular history represents them to have been. Many of the Abolitionists found it in harmony with their material interests to champion West Indian emancipation. They had cold personal reasons for being humanitarians.

In the concluding chapter of 'Capitalism and Slavery' the author lays down five principles "for the examination of what is going on around us today." Two of these principles should be of prime importance to West Indians. Firts, "The political and moral ideas of the age are to be examined in the very closest relation to the economic development" and, next, "An outworn interest, whose bankruptcy smells to heaven in historical perspective, can exercise an obstructionist and disruptive effect which can only be explained by the powerful services it had previously rendered and entrenchment previously gained." These two principles are worthy of the serious attention of those who would understand events and the ideas associated with them.

A perusal of "Capitalism and Slavery" will be historical adventure for the average reader. Old ideas will be undermined and fairy tales exposed for what they are. Dr. Williams writes with great charm. His style is graciously engaging. In these days of quantity production it is a relief to discover a volume with quality as its dominant feature "Capitalism and Slavery" deserves a place of honour on the book-shelf of every West Indian who would understand something of the history of his people and country in relation to Great Britain—the "mother country". 4-25-45

HARTFORD, CONN.
TIMES
Cir. D. 69,473
JUN 23 1945

Negro Migration Within Country Ably Recorded

THEY SEEK A CITY, by Arna Bontemps and Jack Conroy; Doubleday, Doran and Company Inc., $2.75. Reviewed by M. K.

The Negro's pursuit of tolerance and a better economic opportunity is the theme of this gripping story of Negro migration within the United Staes.

The authors have successfully collaborated to present a graphic account of the four great migratory periods, from before the Civil War to the present day.

The book is a selection of the vivid experiences of many men of color who desperately desired to breathe "the free air of God's Country" in the North. They came to dispersal points in Chicago, Cincinnati, St. Louis, Boston, and on to Canada. They braved starvation, cold, bad housing, overcrowding, poor health and recreational facilities, yet few of the "exodusters elected to make the return trip" to the South. Freedom was too precious.

The characters presented not only lived but have left a deep mark on American life and culture. There are, for example, Du Sable, the trader who founded Chicago; James P. Beckworth, an explorer adopted by the Blackfeet Indians; Ida B. Wells, editor of the Memphis Free Speech; the actress, Adah Isaac Menken; W. C. Handy, composer of the "St. Louis Blues."

The experiences of these colored Americans authentically chronicled in a keen and lively style, contribute greatly to our understanding of a race that comprises a tenth of our nation. "They Seek a City" emphatically points out how unfortunate it is that racial prejudice is still "the weakest link in the democratic chain."

NEW YORKER
(New York City)
Cir. 204,986

JUN 16 1945

THEY SEEK A CITY, by Arna Bontemps and Jack Conroy (Doubleday, Doran). The story of the Negro migration from South to North, since the days of the Underground Railroad up to today. The authors have selected from their obviously vast supply of material only facts and figures that are both pertinent and interesting, and have managed to avoid most of the sociological clichés that clutter so many books about the Negro problem. They have also managed, which is even more important, to write about that problem, so often approached more emotionally than intelligently, with understanding, tolerance, and restraint.

COLUMBUS, O.
CITIZEN
Circ. D. 70,404 - S. 88,556

JUN 24 1945

Two Authors Collaborate on Story of Negro Migration; No Dry Collection of Facts

U. S. Has Its 'Homeless Refugees,' Too

By DAPHNE ALLOWAY McVICKER
Citizen Book Critic

IT IS EASY TO STIR ACHING sympathies for the cruel procession of refugees that winds across Europe. Home-keeping hearts are readily caused to throb with sorrow over vanished roof trees. It is simple, also, to add to the pain, an angry blaze of vengeance-seeking wrath toward the cruel marauders who caused this unhappiness to come about.

Mrs. McVicker

These are worthy reactions and, particularly when they are followed by concrete action to help, they are to be admired. But it comes as something of a shock to be informed that we are far from blameless ourselves. That there is, inside our own barriers of country, a homeless stream searching, down the centuries, for a spot where it may flow inside banks of home.

Two authors have collaborated to tell us this tale—Jack Conroy, who had a Guggenheim Fellowship, and Arna Bontemps, who was studying Negroes in Illinois. They have written a moving, dramatic account of Negro migration in the United States. The book is "They Seek a City" (Doubleday, Doran, $2.75). It is no dry collection of facts and geographical data. It throbs with humanity. It thrums to the sound of folk music. It cries out with the heartache of the homeless.

There is drama, too, in stirring successes won by Negro individuals in spite of the heavily stacked cards of environment.

"The first white man in Chicago was a Negro," the book tells us.

This was Du Sable, a trader, born about 1750. And he was one of the great many of his race and color who forged ahead and tried to establish a base in the northern states of the country which had brought his people to its shores and then shrugged away the problem that ensued.

THE CHAPTERS ARE RICH IN ENTERTAINMENT—as rich as a factual "Uncle Tom's Cabin"—without bitterness, since this is not fiction, but vigorously filled with strongly described characters. The varied abilities of the post-slavery Negroes carried groups of them to different spots in the country—some of them tried business, many of them poured along the waves of song and folk music, a few reached top places in medicine, art, education.

But an ugly black wall was raised across each pathway. There were the crimson wounds of lynchings, the yellow disgrace of mob movements. Not a cause for pride. And the end is not yet—there is still the tread of feet moving onward, tired, searching. Until we have granted those citizens full citizenship, we cannot turn our angry reproaches on a power-mad foe.

A more academic dealing with differences in color and race, is "The Asian Legacy and American Life," an imposing book by Arthur E. Christy as editor, with a conclusion by Pearl S. Buck (the John Day Co., $3.50). This is a collection of impressive papers by noted individuals, relating the art, music, agriculture, poetry, etc., of the East and West, tracing sources and crediting to the Orientals much that has been basic in our own development.

It is a handsome book that should prove valuable as source material for studies along this line.

"PRELUDE TO NIGHT" (COWARD-McCANN, $3) is a far cry from any philosophical study of interlocking races. It is a story in the most American tradition, of a poor boy who becomes a rich man, with all of the resulting disappointments and woe.

The author, Dayton Stoddart, is pictured on the back cover tapping at a newspaperman's typewriter. He must have typed many a long night through to produce this giant work. "A wiry boy of 11" with an "easy-going, shiftless father," Horace Vendig learns from his childhood to play all the angles. He works hard, but he is enormously conscious of the chance that leads off from the straight and narrow path, to a short cut slashing straight to a goal.

A tender romance has its place—but when it gets in young Horace's way, it goes overboard. He marries in a fashion to move him closer to the goal of great wealth—to the point where he can eat "off real gold plate."

Although the details of all this are readable, the book to me has a reminiscent flavor of the many, many accounts of the sort that came, flaming and surprising, off the presses in the 20s. The very wicked debutante and her orgies, the scandalous Park-av parties, the naughty ladies and the fiercely eager business men—they do not change, even though there is a more modern flavor to their invironment. The sense of frustration that lies thick about it all is a sad one. Horace obtains his gold plate, but he finds it serving forth Dead Sea ashes.

THE BOOK IS EXPERTLY WRITTEN and the scenes are living and authentic. Its thickness is in multiplicity of incident rather than in natural growth of lives and characters. But if you were too young to read all of the startling big bad books that followed the first World War, you will probably get an amazed thrill from this one.

"The Wayfarers" also is written by a newspaper reporter. (Can it be that all of the reporters are at last getting the great American novel out of the drawer and finishing it?) This book, by Dan Wickenden (Morrow, $2.75), elaborates a miniature rather than spreading over a mural. The lives of Norris Bryant and his childen were dealt a dreadful blow by the death of the wife and mother. When Norris emerges from his fog of grief, he finds his family beset by unhappy problems and he is afraid that his awareness has come too late to help.

The American town living of this family is very real. If the weight of woe is almost too heavy, it is lightened by one or two extremely pleasant characters. The selfish young man who cuts a path of careless destruction through the city is beautifully described. The pseudo-southern neighbor who sets a frilled and pretty cap for Norris will win the reader as well as her man next door.

As for the youngsters, thwarted and lost in an industrial depression, perhaps a war has saved many like them—and any justification for the war must be welcomed with a sigh of reluctant hope.

Mr. Wickenden wrote "The Running of the Deer," which was received with critical delight. The present volume will be read with equal admiration for a skilled craftsman, even with some sadness toward the objects of his pen

Negro Pastor Draws Christian Lessons

'RIOTS AND RUINS' by A. Clayton Powell, Sr. New York: Richard R. Smith, publisher. 171 pp. $2.

Richmond Times-Dispatch
Reviewed by
Elizabeth W. Matthews

FOR some time there has been felt among those interested in improved race relations a need for a volume on the subject which would fall somewhere between Dr. Gunnar Myrdal's monumental "The American Dilemma," and the novels such as Lillian Smith's "Strange Fruit" and Richard Wright's "Black Boy," which some felt condemned the present customs without offering much constructive criticism. The need seems to have been filled admirably by a 79-year-old Virginia-born Baptist Negro minister, Dr. A. Clayton Powell, Sr., now pastor-emeritus of the largest Protestant church in the world, the Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem.

Times Dispatch

Dr. Powell has titled his book "Riots and Ruins," but if he had chosen the title, "Lessons in Christian Living," he might have named it as aptly, though perhaps it would not have the same appeal at the bookstands. And this book deserves to be widely read, for he has lived through bloody race riots, and the devastating ruin which followed, and his plea is for us to remove the conditions which have caused riots in the past, and may do so again. His small, well-written, vigorous book contains all the problems and most of the best answers to the question which rises like a tide all over America. "What are we going to do about race relations during the war and after?"

If we must call one who wishes to change an established order of things which does not benefit a great many of the people a radical, Dr. Powell is a radical. There was another Minister nearly 2,000 years ago who preached the brotherhood of man; and He was a radical, too. Dr. Powell makes no secret of the fact that he is fighting for a better deal for his race. He does not expect all white people to love all Negroes; he gives good reasons why some of them do not deserve it, any more than we expect great stress on the rights which we already enjoy, but which they are not while Americans are respect or like all white people. But he points out accurately that Negroes are many of them not judged by the actions of the uneducated and the hoodlums as important the right to vote, to save money, to read, to pray. But he is critical of the Negroes in there are no voting who do not trouble even to register. In State, to mention but of the colored citizens

As we should expect, in all fairness, for the champion of any cause to do, Dr. Powell summons telling quotations from many of the well-known liberals who have declared themselves against discrimination. He is impatient with the continuing "studies" of race relations, when any Negro child knows that the root of the evil is in the one word, "discrimination."

men by such representatives as George Washington Carver and Marian Anderson. In calling the attention of Negroes to the stumbling blocks in their path toward greater opportunity and achievement, he lays great stress on the rights which Negroes already enjoy, but which they have never registered.

limitations themselves New York one, half

Bishop Wright's New Book

Christian Recorder
12.

BISHOP R. R. WRIGHT

Phila. Pa.

"A. M. E. HAND BOOK FOR PROBATIONERS AND MEMBERS"

There came off the press this week the "A. M. E. Hand Book For Probationers and Members" by Bishop R. R. Wright, Jr.; a little book of 114 pages filled with information and instruction suitable for pastors who wish to hold classes for making better African Methodist. Bishop Wright dedicates the book "To the Oncoming Generations of African Methodists all over the world upon whose Faith, Character, Knowledge and Spirit depends the future of our great church, and to a great degree the future of our people, and all people." In his Foreword the Bishop states the purpose of the book as follows: 3-1-45

"There are thousands of members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church with which they are united. Frequently they come to their pastors class leaders and others for this information and are disappointed; for there is no handy volume which these pastors can put into the hands of their members and say with confidence, "This book will tell you the essential things you wish to know about your beloved Church."

In our Sunday Schools and Allen Leagues are restless young people of inquiring minds, who desire to know about their Church. They raise scores of questions which are not answered satisfactorily. 3-1-45

There are hundred of officers whose enthusiasm could be improved and whose thirst for knowledge satisfied, at least temporarily, if they had a little book like this telling them the things they deire to know and as officers, ought o know about their Church. They would be better officers and could help make those under them better members, after study of such a book.

"Question No. 15, Have the probationers been instructed in the doctrine, discipline and history of our church during this quarter?" How many pastors have felt the prick of guilty conscience when the Presiding Elder asked this question in quarterly conference; and how many have then and there, resolved that they were going to instruct the probationers, next quarter and members too. But they had no text books. Pastors, we believe, will welcome a small handbook for the instruction of probationers, and members, officers and others about our beloved Church, writen in simple language that all can understand.

l ?m.f sa spthe ET SHRD

To meet the needs here set forth this little book is written. It is hoped it will have wide acceptance and that it will introduce many to a larger study of the doctrines, discipline, history and work of the African Methodist Episcopaal Church, and lead to a greater devotion to the noble ends of this great institution ordained by God for the salvation of men.

The book contains 15 chapters

1. The Church,
2. Our Name, 3-1-45
3. History of Our Church,
4. The Discipline,
5. Principles of the Church,
6. Membership,
7. The Ministry,
8. Organization of the Church,
9. General Departments of the Church
10. General Days,
11. Conferences of the Church,
12. Trials of Members, etc.
13. The Christian Life,
14. The Episcopacy,
15. Rites and Ceremonies.

A Leading American Novel For 1945: Story Of A Southern Plantation Family

Advertiser—Montgomery Ala
Montgomery

JENNIFER'S HOUSE, by Christine Noble Govan, Houghton Mifflin Company, The Riverside Press, Cambridge, Mass. 337 pages—$2.50.

The story of the Tremont family, told in a straight-forward and inspiring manner.

This appealing novel takes in the period from 1890 to the days before the present war. It shows the South at the close of its glamorous period and at the beginning of its extreme social change to meet the demands of a modern generation. 3-11-45

Riverridge is the Southern plantation home a wealthy English girl restored to its former beauty following the War Between the States. Her name was Jennifer and she married the heir, John Tremont, and left her homeland to begin a happy married life with her American husband in America.

John Tremont never loved any other woman. However, when he is an old man, he marries Jennifer's companion, Isabel, a penniless girl, 30 years his junior.

There is much to remember about the members of the Tremont family. The author gives you a graphic picture of "their inner-selves" and paints an unforgetable picture of the life at Riverridge.

There is Jonah, the lame grandson; Lucille (Jennifer's and John's eldest daughter), married to a handsome and successful husband, Ransome Parks; and of course of their children. All the grandchildren of Jennifer and John Tremont adore Riverridge and dream of having their descendants inherit the deep peace and goodness of the life in this enchanting ancestral home.

Isabel is a real beauty. Blonde and as ruthless as the brunette heroine of GONE WITH THE WIND, she was the disturber who brought discord to the silvery river, and the world that surrounded the beautiful Southern home of the Tremonts.

When Jennifer Evans was 29, she had met the irresistable John Tremont, then 24, in England. She had fallen desperately in love with him and married him after a six-month courtship. Her money had restored Riverridge. On her arrival in America she found this home of the man she loved tarnished and unkempt, like a beautiful woman who had taken to the streets.

However her money had given it back its fine lines and all of its old richness. 3-11-45

The author explores with sensitive understanding the beliefs and loves of the faithful negroes born and bred on the plantation.

After Jennifer's death Riverridge becomes a hotbed of gossip. As John Tremont, master of Riverridge, expressed it to his favorite young grandson: "Always remember that the people who envy others and want unhappiness for them are to be pitied. They are warped, bitter, and cruel because first of all they are unhappy. If you will remember this you will never be bitter yourself."

You will see some of the older characters in this novel as people stripped of passion and done with striving, who seem filled will a dry wine of wisdom and humor that is mellow and satisfying. Their glowing memories make an interestig and authentic picture of the South in the early part of the 20th century. You will like the carefully groomed members of the Tremont dynasty and you will relive the well-ordered life at Riverridge.

There is dew-drenched enchantment in the glimpses of life in the negro cabins and the natural beauty of the woods along the banks of the river flowing below the bluff that gave the place its name. The white pillowed house seems to take on the spirit of the people who lived there. 3-11-45

JENNIFER'S HOUSE is a poignant story. The author has woven it together with the thoughts, hope, passions, and loves of her unusual and interesting characters. It is a novel that will hold the reader's interest from beginning to end.—E. MAHONEY

Plantation Story
Pittsburgh Courier

"Inching Along" is a little book—an autobiography whose greatest fault lies in the fact it left so much unsaid that should have been revealed. No author ever left out so much of himself, and in so doing, cheated any reader lacking understanding of foresight enough to see what had been omitted. Never was modesty or restraint so splendidly displayed.

If you like to sit and talk with older people when they tell of days long before your time, then the first chapters of this autobiography will suit you, for the wording is as simple and spontaneous as oral conversation; and the little stories the author tells of his youth and his elders back on their plantations just after the Civil War are delightful and remind you of others you have heard before. 5-26-45

Henry Damon Davidson spent his boyhood on the plantations where his father or one or other of his aunts and uncles lived and worked, until he had absorbed the limited education available in the three-months-of-the-year schools of Bibb County, Alabama. Fifth grade was usually as high as one could go. If he were unable to go to a nearby town, as was the author, to further his education, he simply remained in fifth grade until he gave up the ghost and quit. The fifth grade, you see, was usually as far as the teacher could teach! Young Davidson had an unquenchable thirst for knowledge and read and re-read whatever he could get his hands on, remembering amazingly well, and observing always characteristics and weaknesses of his people. He grew to manhood, more frequently undernourished than well fed, working his way, encouraged by his father's great hope that he would secure the education he longed for, and with whatever limited financial assistance his father could give him. It was his keen observance of his people, their needs and limitations, that fed the seed of ambition to found a school which could be attended by the children of his county all year round. His young wife was imbued with the same spirit, but they found a sad lack of that spirit in the older people of the county.

Courier

The book is keenly interesting because it tells of that amazing Negro, the one who lives, prays and works to help his people, despite the privations, the sufferings, the mental torture he must know in advance will be his lot. How unfortunate it is someone did not insist the book be more freely written—so that all its readers might know what the founding and upkeep of the school meant to the author; someone who would insist that more emphasis be placed on the results of the coming of that school to its community: the slowly increasing pride the community took in it; the increased respect forthcoming when the white people of the community learned of benefits the entire community would reap because it was there. 5-26-45

"INCHING ALONG" is well named, for surely did the author get all he had the hard way—the slow, painful way. One knows that, even though the author glossed over much of what he had to endure along the way. Somehow the book left this reviewer as sad as inspired, and wishing the book might have been written in considerably more detail.

EDWINA STREETER DIXON.
Chicago, Ill.

NEGRO CULTURE

HAPPY DAYS, by Jane Dabney Shackelford. Published by the Associated Publishers; 121 pages, $2.15.

This book represents an eminently successful effort to produce a reader for Negro children. It admittedly attempts to present the life pattern of an average Negro boy of thrifty, industrious and intelligent parents who are conscious of their responsibilities to provide their children with adequate opportunities for social development. The technique is sound. The book is one-half actual photographs depicting various experiences in the life of this Negro lad, with brief, simple reading matter. The idea of presenting a reader for Negro children about Negro life is apparently original with the author, who has written other books in this same general field.

This work will serve two purposes. It is bound to be useful to Negro children and their parents, serving among other things as a descriptive presentation of possibilities within the Negro group. It will also be interesting and illuminating to children and adults of other races as a graphic portrayal of the culture of this minority group. It is, perhaps, unimportant that the author's claim to typicality may not be well founded. The book serves, nevertheless, as an encouraging example of the potentialities of Negro life.—W. W. S.

Racial Encyclopedia Published in N.Y.

NEW YORK (ANP)—The Encyclopedia of the Negro preplete study of the colored man and his relations to world affairs, has been prepared and published under the sponsorship of the Phelps-Stokes Fund.

The volume treats of the relation of the peoples of Africa to the future development of civilization the colored potentiality and progress, his changing educational, political and economic status in the United States.

The volume on which some leading white and colored scholars worked, was edited by Dr. W. E. B. DuBois and Guy B. Johnson, white.

The Negro's Long Search for Freedom

"THEY SEEK A CITY," by Arna Bontemps and Jack Conroy. [Doubleday, Doran, $2.75.]

Reviewed by Kelsey Guilfoil

The finest thing about this book is that it was written by a writing team composed of Arna Bontemps, a Negro and former Chicagoan, author of several books and at present librarian of Fisk university, and Jack Conroy, a well known white novelist and former editor of The New Anvil. They have collaborated before, but this is their first book dealing with race relations.

Arna Bontemps

"They Seek a City" is the factual story of the Negro migration to the north—a movement which has been accelerated in more recent years, but which has been going on since the Civil war. It tells of the Negro's search for freedom—not merely political freedom, but equality of opportunity and freedom of spirit. It is a story which the authors have contrived to make highly interesting, at times amusing, often moving, and frequently arousing indignation.

There are many chapters of American Negro history which are known to all who have considered race relations in this country, but which have seldom been presented with such a wealth of well authenticated factual material. Not only is the story of the Underground railroad, which helped Negroes in slavery to escape to Canada and the northern states, told here, but also that other form of escape called "passing," in which light colored Americans of Negro blood have from time to time crossed the color line.

You will find here the complete history of Jean Baptiste Point Du Sable, of whom the Indians used to say that "the first white man in Chicago was a Negro." His origin remains a mystery, tho he is thought to have migrated from Haiti to New Orleans, and thence up the Mississippi valley. His career after that is a matter of record, and his trading post at the mouth of the Chicago river was no rude hut in the wilderness, but was, in 1800, a thriving establishment of several buildings.

Many of the other great Negro personalities are presented in the book. Names like W. C. Handy, composer of the "St. Louis Blues"; Adah Menken, actress of international fame who, tho she was accepted as white, was at least a quadroon; Marcus Garvey, who tried a grandiose scheme to colonize American Negroes in Africa; Ida B. Wells, whose career as journalist and social worker in Chicago is a record of distinguished service—these and others are given at length or touched upon.

• • •

Most important, however, are the records of important race clashes and labor troubles, which the authors have reported with the accurate impartiality of good journalism, but with telling effect. The East St. Louis riot of 1917 is here, and the Chicago trouble of 1919, as well as the less familiar riot at Springfield, Ill., in 1908.

There is just too much information packed into the 252 pages of Bontemps and Conroy's book to give an adequate idea of its scope in a review. But the volume is required reading for those who know little about the Negro's difficulties in his quest for tolerance and freedom.

Soldier Writers

THE BEST FROM YANK, THE ARMY WEEKLY. *Dutton. $3.50.*

ONE regret I had on being discharged from the Army was that *Yank* would no longer be available to me. It is the only magazine that covers the war from the soldier's viewpoint and its circulation is restricted to men in the service. Well-illustrated, cleanly written and progressive in tone, it provides soldiers with a forum relatively free from censorship. The "Mail Call" section of this anthology will give you an accurate picture of the mind of the soldier, at least the letter-writing type, before the mass of the Army was committed to combat. "Mail Call" has a frank discussion on democracy and the Negro in the Army that disproves many of the arguments of reactionaries, especially that the white soldier would not work with his Negro comrades in mixed units. This discussion must have helped higher echelon officers to make up their minds about mixing units on the Western Front. As a record of this war, however, the *Yank* anthology is incomplete, inasmuch as it does not cover the combat experience of our major European campaign, outside of Italy. Most of the men pictured in this selection are still green. Their attitudes have changed since this material was printed. Even the combat reporting from the early Pacific campaigns, North Africa and Italy has little in it that reflects more than the shock of battle, the monotony and the drabness of military life. There is a naive insistence on detail, on the exact reporting of something one has just begun to believe in. Little or no understanding of the nature of our fascist enemies is shown in these selections. The immaturity of the American soldier is the first thing the reader notices. I doubt if any other country could have produced a war anthology with the attitudes expressed by this one.

Part of the special quality of *Yank* is the fact that the best jobs are done by the staff of *Yank* rather than the few "name" writers: Irwin Shaw, Saroyan and Harry Brown. They sound phoney compared with the good journalism of Mack Morriss and Walter Bernstein, who has recently graduated into the name writer class with his book, *Keep Your Head Down.* Joseph Dever's prize-winning short story *Fifty Missions* and some of the work of Ed Cunningham and Merle Miller are superior to the contributions of the professional writers.

The civilian reader may be a bit bewildered by the humor section and fail to get the point of many of the cartoons. The "Sad Sack" cartoons, the wonderful "What's Your Problem" section, the excellent photography and the general youthful approach of the magazine will appeal to everyone. This is a young man's magazine, with all the faults of honesty and political adolescence. The poetry, most of it doggerel, demonstrates it most clearly in the few bitterly satirical failures to communicate to the intended civilian reader. One of the best things in the magazine, the portraits of home towns and the US is omitted. Still, within the limitations of publishing for the family trade, the book is successful in giving the civilian some idea of one of the best things produced by our Army—*Yank*.

11-1945

Bibliography

Life of Average Negro Child Theme of New Book

["My Happy Days," by Jane Dabney Shackelford; Associated Publishers, Washington, DC, 1944; 121 pp., $2.15]

By LUCILLE SPENCE

People's Voice N.Y. 2-10-45

"My Happy Days," by Jane Dabney Shackelford, marks a significant milestone in children's literature. She has initiated a much needed field in "portraying the life of the average Negro child among progressive, hard working and thrifty Negroes trying to make their homes attractive for their children and to direct them in the right way." The photography of Cecil Vinson depicting the activities of the family play an important part in the success of the book.

"My Happy Days" is a delightful book for any child. Its simple language, excellent illustrations and arrangement of written information make it so easily read that a child does not put it down until completed. The cooperative activities of the members of the Nelson family are presented according to the principles of progressive education. Their planning of the new home, fishing trips of father Nelson and Rex, in fact, the various phases of their lives are most heartening and one regrets that thousands of children, Negro and white, do not have this privilege of cooperative family life. 2-10-45

WEAKNESSES OF BOOK

Yet the desire to give the Negro child a feeling of security and satisfaction in reading the book seems to be defeated by the family chosen. Is this an "average" Negro family? All the other Negroes in "My Happy Days"—the nurse, the doctor, the teacher, other children in the school, are darker than the Nelson family. So much is this true that the family seems to stand apart with the absence of dark skin.

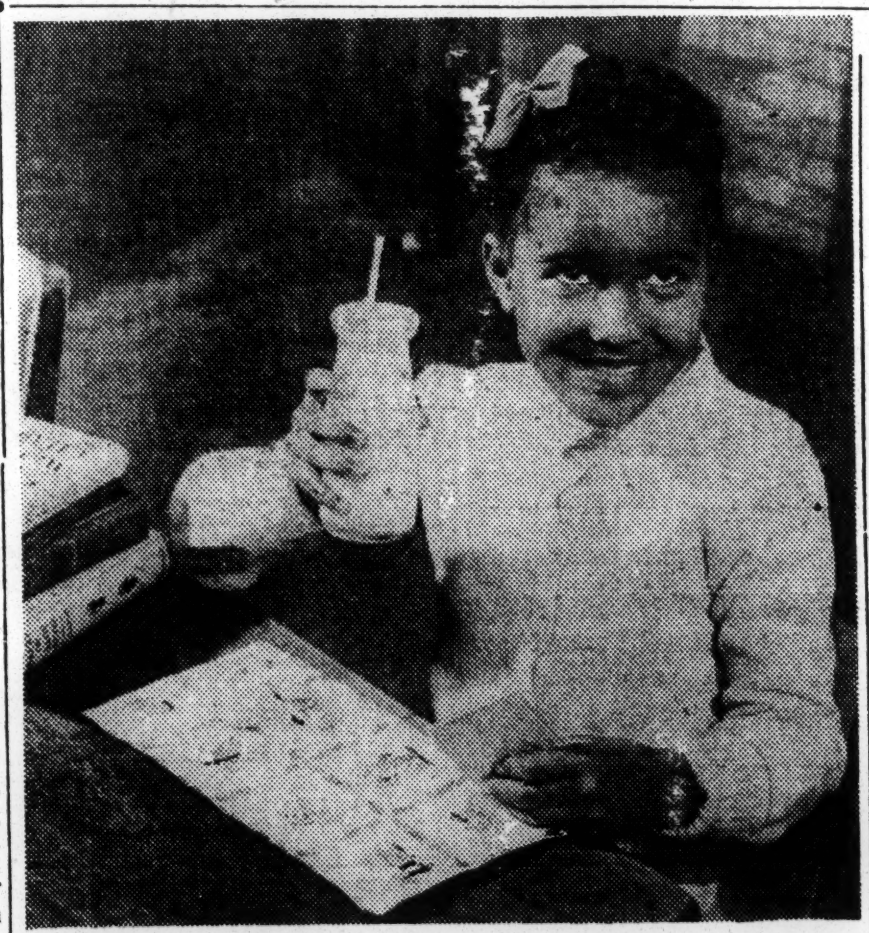
It is surprising that Mrs. Shackelford and her advisors did not notice this. Their task is otherwise so well done.

An example of the effect of this lightness of skin is the only picture of an activity shared by both the Negro and white children of the community, the Book Week festival at the library. Our little hero, the only Negro child present, is so fair that it is difficult to find him among the white children.

BOOK A "STEP FORWARD"

Moreover, here again is a weakness in the book. A segregated Negro community is the locale of the book. Mrs. Shackelford would have done a prophetic service both for the children of segregated communities and the integrated areas of the North and West if she had included more activities shared by both Negro and white children, the end to which our democracy is developing. 2-10-45

In spite of the two weaknesses noted, both the Negro and white child of our country will be grateful for a greater pride and understanding of a certain phase of the Negro family life. "My Happy Days" is a delightful step forward in children's literature.



A TYPICAL "AVERAGE NEGRO CHILD"—the kind of child Mrs. Shackelford writes about in "Happy Days"—a healthy, happy child who laughs and cries over the same things any other American child laughs and cries over. 2-10-45

Correction

Last week's PV published on this page a review by Dr. Alpheus Hunton of Eric Williams' "Capitalism and Slavery." The first sentence of that review should read: "A Century and a quarter ago, soon after the American colonies had won their independence, Imperial Britain was beset with the problem of what to do about the West Indies; today Britain is faced with the question of India and the rest of its far-flung empire."

The Young Man Jefferson

The Nation

THE YOUNG JEFFERSON. By Claude G. Bowers. Houghton Mifflin Company. $3.75.

3-17-45

NO YOUNG man living 175 years ago more completely embodied in himself the nation as it was to be than did the Jefferson of 1775. What Jefferson envisaged before the American Revolution we are today in the United States in actuality. If Winston Churchill or Joseph Stalin or our Latin American neighbors wish to understand how deeply imbedded is the fundamental essence of American democracy, let them read this latest book by Claude Bowers.

More than any other single individual Jefferson is the prophet and the architect of New World democracy. The British democracy in the time of Jefferson was as restricted in its vision and as narrow in its application as the Jewish religion in the time of King David. Jefferson broke the bonds of an established aristocracy, an established church, and an established ignorance. He believed in the potentialities of black men and Indians as well as of white men. Just as the Apostle Paul was driven by the universal implications of the Christian religion, so Jefferson was driven by the universal implications of Anglo-Saxon democracy.

Prophets and Founding Fathers always seem strangely cold, distant, and inhuman. This circumstance is remedied so far as Jefferson is concerned by Mr. Bowers's most recent book. While not as exciting as his two volumes dealing with the Hamilton controversy and Jefferson as President, this book is probably more fundamentally important. And we gain many fascinating glimpses of Jefferson as a human

he did something about them. It was as a young man, not in his old age, that he designed Monticello. As a young man he was a practical lawyer, trying more than four hundred cases a year and earning more than three thousand dollars in lawyer's fees. As a farmer he made a net income of more than two thousand dollars. Wherever he went he had an excellent wine cellar. As seems so often to be the case with men of artistic temperament, he greatly appreciated association with women. Bowers's account of his lady friends in Paris just before the French Revolution makes most interesting reading.

It seems to me that Jefferson, a most uncommon man, sensed that every common man had in him many of the potentialities which he, Jefferson, recognized in himself. That is why the phrase, "All men are created equal," became the very core of Jefferson's being and eventually, because of Jefferson's efforts, the very core of American democracy. Believing this so strongly, he fought to make the new Virginia constitution, immediately after the Declaration being during the first forty-five years of his life.

Jefferson, despite his belief in democracy, was definitely not a common man. His father had started out as a common man but had accumulated enough property to marry into an aristocratic family. And so the young man Jefferson had an abundance of opportunity to study, to play the violin, to ride horseback, to dance, and to enjoy all the social amenities, including wine and good cooking. Jefferson was never in any sense dissipated, wild, or profligate; yet we can hardly hold up to the youth of the land his first year of college at William and Mary as one which they should imitate. Neither can we suggest that our young people should literally study their eyes out as Jefferson did during his later school career. 3-17-45

Jefferson undoubtedly felt within himself great creative power extending in many directions. Thus we see manifested at quite an early age an intense yet practical interest in science, in the arts, in agriculture, and in graceful living. His interests were not purely intellectual or passive—

of Independence, into an instrument for religious freedom, free education, and the abolition of slavery and feudalistic land-holding systems. In the most aristocratic of all the colonies Jefferson planted seed which will bear fruit as long as mankind exists. 3-17-45

Jefferson, because he felt in the very center of his being that the supremely important thing about government had to do with insuring to each individual the dignity of his own soul, was a great believer in freedom of all kinds. He was absent from our Constitutional Convention because he was serving as Minister to France, but when the new constitution was mailed to him he insisted by letter from France that there be added to it a bill of rights which would include among other things security for five freedoms—"freedom of religion, freedom of press, freedom from monopolies, freedom from unlawful imprisonment, and freedom from a permanent military."

It is interesting to note Jefferson's reference to "freedom from monopolies" in 1788, in view of the way in which various types of monopolists have been trying to hide behind the phrase "Jeffersonianism" and "states' rights" ever since the time of Theodore Roosevelt. Prior to the time of Theodore Roosevelt the corporations were on the whole against states' rights because they felt they had a better chance with the federal government than with the state governments. With them it has not been a matter of governmental philosophy but of expediency. 3-17-45

No one can read Mr. Bowers's book on "The Young Jefferson" and have any illusions as to where Jefferson himself would stand today if he had the opportunity to battle in his uncommon way for the common man against the forces of hereditary wealth, privilege, and monopoly.

There is an astonishing similarity between Jefferson and Franklin Roosevelt in many ways. I cannot help feeling that Roosevelt must have drawn more inspiration from Jefferson than from any other of our historical figures. In both are to be found the same artistic architectural bent, the same love of agriculture, the same joy in the amenities of life, the same capacity for the most careful and precise use of political power. In both also we find world-embracing statecraft. Jefferson as a young man visioned the westward expansion of our nation and the building of the Panama Canal. The importance of Mr. Bowers's book is that it spells out for our young people and our friends overseas just how the young man Jefferson got that way. 3-17-45

HENRY A. WALLACE

About Books

Afro-American

By ETHEL WILLIAMS

COLCORTON:: :By Edith Pope. New York, C. Scribner's & Sons, 1944. Pp. 330. $2.75.

It was when Abby Clanghearne was fifteen that she and her brother Jared inherited the bankrupted estate of their grandfather, a slave-trader of pre-Civil War days.

This is Abby's story and it begins a century after her grandfater built "Colcorton," a former mansion in the "wilderness," although actually only a short distance from St. Augustine, Fla.

It is here where Abby struggles with her conscience, her nature and her poverty to guard a secret she discovered in the will left by her grandfather.

Last of the Clan

Abby and her brother are the last of the clan. "Colcorton" is "ambushed in jungle," its windows are boarded and its fornt steps gone long ago to pay Jared's tuition through law school.

For twenty years Abbey stints and saves, content to dream of the day when Jared would be governor. "Always and always she had dinned it into Jared that the Clanghearnes wasn't crackers and Minorcans, mixed like folks thought they were.

The first Jared Clanghearne, her grandpaw, was rich and looked up to. What the first one was so could Jared be."

She refused to marry Dan Stikleather although she knew he could make her a happy woman. Nothing must interfere with her plans to restore "Colcorton" and the Clanghearne's to their former glory. 2-13-45

Grandfather's Will

The first threat to Abby's world comes when Jared returns to "Colcorton" with his law degree and a young bride. He discovers his grandfather's will while searching through some old records at the Court House and subsequently the knowledge of the heritage of colored blood, the secret that Abby had tried so hard to keep from him.

This knowledge is too much for him, as it was for his father, and he becomes a drunkard and is killed, not however, before leaving his young bride with the promise of an heir. 2-13-45

New World for Son

Now, Abby instead of giving in to despair, begins to build a new world around Jared's son, who comes despite her wishes and prayers.

The blow to this new world comes when Clement Johnson, a New England writer and temporary boarder at "Colcorton," gradually becomes aware of Abby's strangeness and aloofness and piece by piece builds up the secret of "Colcorton." 2-13-45

Must Leave Estate

Abby *now realizes that she must give up her dreams and leave her beloved "Colcorton." She sells the estate and sends Jared's widow and son North and wanders off into life still confident that the secret, though discovered, would not harm her family.

Whether you are absolutely convinced of the logic of the conclusion of Miss Pope's story is perhaps not important. The tone of the book as a whole is so clear, the characters so human, the central theme so admiredly developed that it is undoubtedly one of the outstanding novels of the years.

New Book On Red Cross Overseas Tells Story Of Ledo Road Job

Journal & Guide Norfolk, Va. 3-25-45

WASHINGTON, D. C. — Negro soldiers made a proud record along the Ledo road in the China-Burma-India war theatre, as reported in the book, "At His Side," the story of the American Red Cross overseas in World War II, published on Monday, March 19, by Coward-McCann, New York.

Building the Ledo road through the Burmese jungle was one of the engineering marvels of the global war, the author points out. Army bulldozers, trucks, jeeps and rock crushers, transported 7,000 miles from the United States, did a wonderful job. So did the United States Army engineering units, predominantly Negro, according to Korson. The Ledo road, linked to the Burma road, opened up a land route into China and permitted the shipment of vital war goods to China.

STEADY CONVOYS

"Even before grading, surfacing and drainage, U. S. Army motor convoys, driven by Negro soldiers, moved in a steady stream in both directions," states the author.

"Among the U. S. Army units stationed at various points along the road, the 823rd and 45th Engineers, and the 45th and 21st Quartermaster's were composed entirely of Negroes, except for officers. Red Cross workers said that they were cool, brave, and patient under extremely adverse conditions.

Inevitably there were serious accidents. Skidding in the slippery mud was common (except for small stretches of crushed-rock surface, the Ledo was a dirt road). Some trucks failed to make the steep grade and overturned; some sideswiped each other. Occasionally a truck would not negotiate a hairpin curve, left the road and crashed into the bottomless gorge below."

CHAIN OF CLUBS

The American Red Cross opened a chain of clubs along the Ledo for the entertainment of truck drivers, road builders, and maintenance crews. 3-25-45

One of the clubs was set up exclusively for Merrill's Marauders, that tough outfit of jungle fighters, after they had returned from the jungle and had captured Myitkyina in May, 1944. A few GIs from other outfits—white and Negro—began dropping in.

"When an MP—one of the Marauders—was asked his opinion on the matter of putting the intruders out or allowing them to stay," writes Korson, "he looked earnestly into the eyes of the inquirer and expressed the sentiments of "the toughest infantry unit" of the CBI. He replied, "Ma'am, I couldn't put those fellows out of here.

GAVE THEM HEART 3-25-45

"This is just like my home. All along the Road (Ledo) other fellows welcomed us into their clubs. And as for the colored fellows, why their band met us on the Road when we were weary and discouraged, and gave us heart to go on. I just couldn't put 'em out." 3-25-45

Hundreds of other incidents highlight the book—stories told by American Red Cross overseas workers, including more than 200 Negro men and women, who volunteered to share front-line hardships and dangers with U. S. fighting men.

About Books

New York Amsterdam News 2-17-45

By CONSTANCE H. CURTIS

AN ANTHOLOGY OF AMERICAN NEGRO LITERATURE edited by Sylvester C. Watkins. The Modern Library, New York, 1944. 481 pp. $.95.

This Modern Library edition of the works of some of America's outstanding writers is worth while in many ways. It is an anthology which has chosen without any apparent prejudice those who would be contributors, it gains through that impartiality, a broader treatment of the whole.

assuring widespread distribution to any literature. And such distribution is needed by Negro witers.

Many Good Writers

The volume is divided into four major sections, which treat in order the short story, essays, autobiographies and biographies. By far the longest of these sections is that which contains the essays of such diverse authors as W. E. B. Du Bois and George S. Schuyler. The reader is not only given an opportunity to sample the styles of most of our country's recognized Negro authors, but the material of the essays is of great importance also. The subject matter deals with the press, history, culture, poetry and discrimination against the Negro. The essays serve not only as a key to the styles of writing done by Negro authors, but also are invaluable as a collection of the ideas of some of the outstanding thinkers of the race. 2-17-45

Any criticism of the absence of a section on poetry is well answered in the preface of the volume, where explanation is made that in the past few years, five definitive anthologies of Negro poetry have appeared, so that another seems at this time unnecessary. Mention is made, however, of poetry in the volume, in the essay of Sterling Brown on "Contemporary Negro Poetry, 1914-1936," and in that by Alain Locke on "The Negro in American Culture."

To see such a volume as this published by the Modern Library is encouraging. In this well edited and yet extremely inexpensive volume, there is more than a chance that Negro literature will be read in places it has not reached before. Publication in popular editions is perhaps one of the surest ways of

One gains an impression that the volume was printed primarily as an educational venture, rather than as a table "handbook" filled with many pleasant evenings' reading. Whether one turns to the short stories, the essays of the lives, it becomes apparent that there is always "meatiness" in what the authors are saying. In the entire collection, there is not a single piece which seems to have been included because the author wrote it for the mere joy that it might give.

Editor to Blame

It is hard to decide whether this lack is to be laid at the door of the editor or of the writers. I am inclined to blame the editor, for there are pieces written by Negroes which do not eternally revolve about the race question. Granted that Negroes lives are bound on all sides with preoccupation with the ever-present barriers of race, the problem is forgotten sometimes by writers as well as others, and when this happens a different sort of literature emerges.

An Anthology of American Negro Literature is a worthy compilation. The fact that it leans too far to the educational is the only outstanding fault to be found there. It is a volume well worth having.

11-1945

Bibliography

LOOKS at BOOKS

FACTS ABOUT INDIA

Pittsburgh Courier 2-10-45

In "The People of India" Kumar Goshal has given us a book on that huge subjugated peninsula which should go a long way toward informing the general public about the political facts of life and correct a whole lot of misinformation, much of it sedulously circulated by the British in their efforts to justify their rule of 400 million dark people.

"The People of India" (Sheridan House, New York, $3) is a book of only 375 pages, and when one reflects that the known history of India goes back to 5,000 years ago, when already the land had achieved a high state of civilization, Mr. Goshal is to be commended for having so successfully condensed his summary within so brief a space and yet presented a fair summary and critique.

In art, culture, music and economic development, India 200 years ago was superior to any country in the world except China. There was far less illiteracy than there is now, and in the main the people were prosperous and as happy as most human beings manage to get. Of course there were the periodic wars without which the human race seems to be unable to get along, but it is doubtful if as many Indians were killed in all of them as died in the famine in Bengal two years ago which was deliberately fostered by the British. 3-10-45

THE ENGLISH LEECHES

Goshal tells calmly, but not without some bitterness, how the British got control of India, how they bled the country of its wealth, how they deliberately destroyed Indian manufacture in order to boost their own, how they used Indian wealth to finance their wars throughout Asia and Africa, how they purposely back the Indian feudal princes in order to keep the country divided, how they foster and promote religious strife, how they deliberately dope the masses with opium, and how, when the Indians are on the point of another revolt, their leaders are clapped into jail without trial, and later on another of the periodic British commissions comes out to investigate conditions in an effort to appease the natives while maintaining the status quo. Time after time the British have kidded Indian leaders in this manner. Each British concession has been like a popcorn ball—attractive to look at, but not very nourishing. They seem to be designed to still the clamor of the educated without stemming the stream of gold into British pockets, and easily enough, the Anglo-Saxons have been successful. Even today most Indian leaders seem to think there is some way of getting freedom from the British except by the methods of Toussaint L'Overture, Nikola Lenin and Simon Bolivar.

* * *

NATIONAL UNITY 3-18-45

British propaganda to the contrary, there is a great and increasing Indian national unity. There would be more, of course, if it were not for British backing of the Indian princes and the Mohammedan separatists. Right now the vast country is seething, but because the "democratic" British control the news outlets we hear nothing about it. 3-10-45

What India seems to need is a strong and widespread underground movement which will stop all this rot about cooperating with the British to defeat Fascism (as if any fascism would be worse than the British!) and get to work with fire, sword and sabotage to run them completely out of the country. After all, there are not over a half million British in India, and it should not be difficult for a determined Underground to destroy them as the Haitians destroyed the French. Like the Inlians, the Haitians were without modern arms, and yet they struck at the opportune time. It is too bad the Indians did not strike in 1942 when the British were on their knees.

GEORGE S. SCHUYLER.

Life in Billiard Hollow, Atlanta

SWING LOW. By Edwin A. Peeples. 293 pp. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.50. N.Y. Times

HERE is the story of Negro Willy Mack and his wife, Amy, and their effort to transplant themselves from rural Georgia to Atlanta. The result is a competent and interesting novel, including as it does a generous assortment of Southern

white and Negro types, for the most part faithfully drawn, and a consequently wide assortment of white and Negro attitudes. The result is also melodrama, charged with sentiment, violence and despair—but of what recent novel about the Negro, best-seller or otherwise, is this not true?

Atlanta's Billiard Hollow, where Willy Mack and Amy settled, is the typical collection of leaky, drafty, tumble-down houses in which the poor of almost any great city (North or South) exist. Here Willy Mack and Amy come to know Brother Hickerson, who preaches moral platitudes designed to keep the dwellers in the Hollow out of trouble; Sugar Flo, a caramel-colored girl who operates a house of entertainment; Hadley, vicious poor-white, symbol of ignorance and race prejudice; Joe Sluefoot, Negro dandy, who lives by his wits, and Mr. Jim, for whom Willy Mack works and who makes a strong but fruitless fight to obtain justice for his employé. Those who fail, as Willy Mack and Amy do, fail from a combination of forces, both without and within themselves. If this weakens the novel as propaganda, it strengthens it as literature. 3-25-45

What Mr. Peeples modestly wants for the urban Negro as an immediate, practical minimum is expressed by Willy Mack's friend Al Cooney: "Us wants to have a house can't no police be breakin' into all the time. And us wants a fair chance in the courts. Us wants a chance to work at something more than hard labor and us wants the garbage collected where us lives, and the privies made to be kept working."

FINALLY, the novel seems to suggest that until conditions can be improved many Negroes would do better to follow the agrarian life they know rather than to crowd into the cities. Thus, Willy Mack never is content in town, and when he and Amy set out to return to the farm, he reflects, "the fields would be green and in bloom at home, and the folks would be planting. The ground would smell good. . . . There would be plenty of corn pone and greens and eggs and milk in the country. . . . There would be the smell of a mule and of hay in the sun." 3-25-45

Mr. Peeples grapples honestly and conscientiously with a difficult problem and writes of the Negro neither as a simple-minded oaf incapable of serious feeling nor as an oppressed and sinless child of nature, but, kindly and movingly, as a human being.

NASH K. BURGER.

About Books

N.Y. Amsterdam News

By CONSTANCE H. CURTIS

WORLD'S BEGINNING, by Robert Ardrey. Duell, Sloan and Pearce, New York. 1945. 244 pp. $2.50. N.Y.

WORLD'S BEGINNING is a very different book. From nearly the opening page the reader finds that he has begun a novel in which the author not only has something to say, but one in which he says it in a "different" manner. The book is written from the viewpoint of a man living twenty years after the war has closed. The happenings set down are those which take place between the "making of the peace" and twenty years thereafter. 2-24-45

Of paramount importance in the volume is the fact that the author holds that all of the things he is "writing after the war" could have been written before the war ended. And he is right. Those things discussed by Mr. Ardrey are not beyond belief. Even for those of us with only ordinary intelligence and the ability to read, there is every indication that the post-war world will not be a bed of roses.

Disillusionment

In our not-too-distant future, the author sees a nation torn apart by the disillusionment of a people who have lived too long with hope and too little with common sense and fairness. He sees a country swept by the virus of a race hate such as we have not known before—one which flares throughout the country in a series of riots, decimating the Negro population.

The break-up of the economic system we have fought for—for some reason—for so long to save, and the increasing inflation that comes with this breakdown, aid in the deterioration of our society. Americans cease to be a nation of "go-getters," men lose bit by bit their fundamental integrity, and the country disintegrates under its own weight. 2-24-45

It is at this low ebb in America's fortunes, when foreign correspondents from all over the globe are assigned here to watch what transpires, that the nation finds its salvation—according to the author. Through means which are neither communistic, socialistic or fascistic, we pull through to a beginning of deliverance.

Riots, Depressions

For the purpose of saving the climax of a well written and intensely absorbing novel, it is important not to discuss from what quarter and by what means this salvation is attained. 2-24-45

Readers may hail the solution set forth by this young author as a means for working out the future of our nation before we reach the brink. Others may disagree. Certainly, every intelligent reader must admit that the things foreseen by him are not dim in the future by rather all too clear. Riots, depression, disorganization and decay, do lie within the conceivable future of Americans, if men the world over do not begin to work toward some sort of solution.

WORLD'S BEGINNING is an engrossing novel. It goes beyond the mere act of entertainment, however, and through its swift flowing and well knit plot, manages to make the reader stop and consider the future with much clearer eyes. 2-24-45

This is a first novel, and one which has evidently grown out of not only the heart but the mind of the author. One can be nearly certain that Richard Ardery will be heard from again in the future. He writes with violence and skill, with intensity and an all around smoothness which commend him to a large and growing audience. His first novel is a good attempt. It is a fine book.

New Book Barred As 'Objectionable'

Peoples Voice, N.Y. 1-27-45

The Post Office has barred from the mails a book entitled **Dark Rapture**, by Felix Bryk, published by Juno Books of Forest Hills, N. Y., an ethnological account of the life of the African Negro, with an introduction called "Critique of Sexual Anthropology" by J. D. Unwin.

Certain sections of the text have been considered "objectionable" by the Post Office—a decision from which the publisher is appealing on the grounds that the work is scientific.

Negro Migrations

THEY SEEK A CITY. By Arna Bontemps and Jack Conroy. 266 pp. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. $2.75.

By VIRGINIUS DABNEY

THIS study of Negro migration from the South to the North and West during a period of more than a century pulls together a good deal of interesting material which heretofore has been scattered in books, pamphlets and newspapers. It begins with the flight of slaves from the antebellum South via the Underground Railroad, and ends with the recent movements to industrial centers beyond the Mason and Dixon Line.

Messrs. Bontemps and Conroy, who have collaborated in producing this book, seem objective enough, for the most part, in discussing the disabilities and obstacles which have confronted the Negro in the period under notice. They present data showing that all sections have discriminated against him. But our authors are guilty of some remarkable generalizations.

Consider, for example, this statement in the prologue, apropos of the Negroes who left the South before the Civil War, and in the years which followed that conflict: "There was nothing to make one want to stay—never." This is almost as preposterous as the declaration of Angelina Grimké, the brilliant but eccentric antebellum South Carolinian, that she had never seen "a happy slave."

Messrs. Bontemps and Conroy also assert in their epilogue that "no Negro who can read is going to remain in the poll-tax Jim Crow South longer than he has to." This is no less absurd than the statement quoted above. The fact is that large numbers of Negroes with Ph. D.'s and other honors are living below the Potomac from choice.

But despite such occasional derelictions, the authors of "They Seek a City" have assembled a body of material which is illuminating, and which argues, at times, for a viewpoint contrary to that expressed in the foregoing quotations. Consider the following from The Chicago Tribune published by that newspaper about two weeks prior to the terrible East St. Louis, Ill., race riot of 1917:

We taunt the South with race prejudice when it burns "a bad nigger," but just see how we Northerners detest even "good niggers." The real race prejudice is ours. Our very philanthropists betray it. They say to a black man "God bless you, good-by," whereas the South says "—— you, come here!" Or put it this way: The Northerner is a great friend of the Negro, but not of a Negro; the Southerner is a great friend of a Negro; but not of the Negro.

THERE are numerous other evidences in the volume under review that the Negroes who have been pouring from the South for more than a hundred years often have failed to find surcease in the North or the West. Messrs. Bontemps and Conroy describe vividly the foul slums in which they have had to live in Chicago, Detroit and other cities. They depict in lurid detail the race riots in certain of those cities. They tell of the steps taken by whites to prevent a man like the late Richard B. Harrison, the famous "Lawd" of "The Green Pastures," from moving into a section of Chicago which previously had been denied to members of his race.

This book sheds light upon some of the major figures who operated the Underground Railroad, such as Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth. It examines the tragic life of Paul Laurence Dunbar. It probes into the career of the late Marcus Garvey, and his "Back to Africa" movement, and is less harsh in its estimate of Garvey than some who have discussed his actions and his motives. It describes the discriminations of labor unions, North and South, against colored members.

THE East St. Louis riot, which took place in the State of Abraham Lincoln, was one of the worst of the riots which grew directly, or indirectly, out of that exodus. The more recent clash in Detroit during the summer of 1943, also is examined in some detail, as is the Philadelphia street-car strike during the following summer. Is it not significant that each of these major racial encounters took place outside the South? Of late, no interracial conflict of comparable magnitude and bitterness has occurred within the borders of the former Confederacy.

The authors of "They Seek a City" are aware of this incongruity, no doubt, and they are reasonably objective in their presentation of material. The handful of egregious generalizations of which they are guilty do not mar greatly what is, on the whole, a sound and valuable book.

About Books

By CONSTANCE H. CURTIS

THEY SEEK A CITY, By Arna Bontemps and Jack Conroy. Doubleday, Doran, Garden City, N. Y., 1945. 266 pp. $2.75.

Man's desire for freedom has not yet been limited by race or color of skin, country or time. Where oppression has flowered, there too has always been resistance, and the growing pressure of the oppressed against their shackles.

THEY SEEK A CITY is the story of one of the means by which the American Negro has sought to fight prejudice and discrimination in this country. It is one of the sides of a many faceted story—flight—and it holds all the drama of a people fleeing oppression.

As a historical work the volume has real importance, bringing together in one book the four major times in our history when Negro migration reached its peak. The first great migrations to the north came during slavery, when the Underground Railroad aided the movement of the people to the north and Canada. Just following the Civil War the second wave of migration came, as jobs were sought in the industries of the north. After the first World War, yet another wave broke over the country, and now, during our own day, migration has begun again as job opportunities opened during the second world conflict.

Living Story

The authors have made their story a living chronicle by the simple method of telling in the discussion of each period, the stories of many men who took part in the mass flights from the south. Men like Du Sable, founder of Chicago; Harriet Tubman, one of the leaders of the Underground; John Jones, small business man who found wealth in Chicago; Marcus Garvey, gatherer of the "beloved and scattered millions," and many others, find their way into the volume, where they take on glowing life.

The men and women who were leaders of the masses are only a few of those who are discussed in THEY SEEK A CITY. Snatches of the conversation of those whose names we will never know, the songs they sang and their sufferings are recorded. There are little pictures, of Negro and white boys, "bumming" their way north, and of the dark boys being sadistically tortured while the white were allowed to go.

There are those who sang:

"Some are coming on the passenger,
Some are coming on the freight.
Others will be found walking,
For none will have time to wait."

Folk songs like the one above, and those like "Steal Away," were part of the migrants' creed and acted as his marching songs.

Historical Fact

Arna Bontemps and Jack Conroy have done an admirable piece of work in their book. Without the violence of Richard Wright or the teaching of Lillian Smith, they have still managed to get across the feeling of the Negro in America. In the recital of historical fact, they have been able to make clear the fight against intolerence which has been carried on ceaselessly since democratic ideals were built and immediately broken.

Much of the value which lies in the book, stems, I believe from this basic difference. The reader cannot dismiss the people who appear between its covers as simply "different." There have been and still are too many of them. They are the men we see each day, those we work beside—they are ourselves. Within them as well as within the Bigger Thomases and the Nonnies, there is the need not to be different, the desire to be accepted.

Sometimes one thinks the city sought is El Dorado or Shangri La, but that has not stopped the seeking for the "promised land."

NEW YORK, N.Y.
WORLD-TELEGRAM
Circ. D. 434,603 — Sat. 337,198

Humor Among Negroes.

It is reassuring to learn from Langston Hughes that Negroes often have a good laugh at Jim Crow signs and devices. He describes some of them in a booklet called **The Best of Negro Humor** (Negro Digest Co., 50c.) If Negroes can laugh at some of these absurdities, maybe the white communities that perpetrate them will see their stupidity and abolish them.

In driving near Washington on the way to Richmond, Mr. Hughes stopped at a refreshment stand to buy some sodas and found that he couldn't open the door. The proprietor was holding it shut. He informed Mr. Hughes that there was a hole cut in the side of the stand through which he served Negroes. "That seemed to me to belong in Alice in Wonderland," said the author.

He also recalls an experience in Savannah, Ga., where he had entered the waiting room to buy a paper because there was no newsstand in the Jim Crow waiting room. A policeman stopped him from leaving the room, saying, "You can't come in and out of this front door." "How do I get out, then?" asked Mr. Hughes. "Only way I see is for you to walk the tracks," said the policeman. This incident struck the author as "unbelievably quaint" and kept him laughing all day.

"I would love to write for a Negro humorous publication," he says. "The serious colored magazines as a rule won't publish funny stuff, even if you give it to them free. They evidently think the race problem is too deep for relief—at least, comic relief."

NEW YORK, N. Y.
SUN
Circ. D. 277,172

AUG 3 - 1945

Beecher Writes Story Of Mixed Crew Ship

Under the title of "All Brave Sailors, published by L. B. Fischer, John Beecher, a great-grandnephew of Harriet Beecher Stowe, has written the story of the steamship Booker T. Washington, the first ship sent out by the United States Merchant Marine skippered by a Negro captain and with white and Negro men working together as officers and crew.

Beecher signed up as purser of the Booker T. Washington soon after the ship was put into service, expecting to make just one trip. He stayed for two years. His book includes a collection of sketches of the men serving under Capt. Hugh Mulzac. The crew, mostly Americans, included Brazilians, Filipinos, Scandanivans, Spaniards, Persians, West Indians and Peruvians. The author, in a forword, writes that there were white men, born and bred in the South, who took orders from Negro officers, ate and slept alongside Negro shipmates, went ashore in foreign ports with Negroes — and, on occasion, knocked down those who wanted to make something of it.

Dr. Weaver's Study on Seniority Problems Is Timely Publication

the Call

Robert C. Weaver, director of Community Services of the American Council on Race Relations, has just issued a study on "Seniority and the Negro Worker," which deals with the problems facing Negro workers, their employers and their unions during the reconversion period.

Kansas City, Mo.

The study emphasizes the point that union seniority will have varying effects upon Negroes and that no over-all, categorical statement of its influence upon Negro labor is possible. It also indicates the limitations and improbability of security adjustments in union seniority for Negro workers.

Describing seniority as "preference in employment based upon length of service," Mr. Weaver lists as the most important types of seniority the following:

a. Company or plant-wide seniority under which seniority is computed upon the length of service in the company or the plant, and transfers from job to job within the company have no effect on an employe's seniority standing.

b. Departmental or occupational seniority under which there are separate departmental or occupational seniority lists.

9-3-45

c. Various combinations of the two types of seniority listed above.

In each type of seniority it is customary to lay off those with the least amount of seniority first and to effect reemployment in reverse order to layoffs," the study reveals. "Such a procedure is in accordance with strict seniority, the norm around which all seniority agreements are developed."

Were there no union seniority agreements, Mr. Weaver claims, hundreds of thousands of Negroes would be displaced from wartime jobs during reconversion because "in periods of large scale unemployment workers new to an industry are usually 'let out' as a group before employes with longer service records."

Describing this method of displacement as 'a form of employers' seniority," the study points out that it differs from union seniority "in that it is open to many exceptions and affords the individual with long work experience no assured job security."

In some industries, according to the study, seniority will speed up displacement of colored war workers and in others it will "operate to preserve the numerical gains in employment which Negroes have made during the war."

The findings indicate three over-all developments will determine the influence of union seniority upon Negro war workers:

1. Volume of employment.
2. The extent to which servicemen decide to return to their old jobs.
3. The proportion of white women, with larger seniority than Negro males, who decide to stay on their wartime jobs.

"All of these are unknown," Mr. Weaver states. "It is, however, safe to assume . . . that in heavy and dirty industry . . . a smaller proportion of veterans will elect to take up their seniority rights. In a lighter industry, such as automobiles, a large proportion of veterans and women will elect to use their seniority.

AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY

The automobile industry, according to the study, is "an industry in which there will be intense reconversion problems."

Because of expanded employment for Negro workers in Detroit, the city in which the study of the auto industry was made, Negroes have advanced sufficiently enough to make "the preservation of wartime gains . . . extremely important," although they have not achieved equal opportunities in upgrading.

At present, layoffs which began as early as the spring of 1945 are harassing the industry, the study reveals, and, according to competent observers, between 250,000 and 400,000 workers will eventually be subjected to transitional unemployment, a factor which will seriously affect the 75,000 colored workers, who, until cutbacks set in, comprised 15 percent of the men and women employed in Detroit automobile plants.

Weaver asserts that the problem is further complicated by the differences in opinion of management and labor concerning the hiring of returning veterans.

For example, the industry demands that seniority rules be changed to permit the hiring of veterans "at least on equal footing with men and women who have entered the industry since the war began."

On the other hand, the UAW and other unions are in favor of crediting servicemen with employment seniority, but "this does not begin for the ex-serviceman without previous experience in a plant until he gets a job . . . and it does not permit a newly hired veteran to displace a worker who has acquired seniority through employment in a plant since Pearl Harbor."

Mention is also made of the "six point transfer agreement" set up by the auto industry in 1940 describing the basic seniority principles governing reconversion employment patterns. The agreement was that a worker transferred out of a peacetime job accumulated seniority in that job regardless of what he did in war production. Weaver sums up the effect of the six point program in this manner: "Under the agreement a larger number of Negroes would probably remain on the payroll than under conditions of plant-wide seniority, since the older Negro worker would have the right to jobs in occupations which had traditionally been manned by Negroes. The older Negro employes would continue to work in a few departments, but they would lose most if not all of their wartime occupational advancement."

MEAT PACKING INDUSTRY

"The application of union seniority in the meat packing industry will be beneficial to the Negro worker," the analysis reveals. "It will operate to sustain the occupational gains colored workers have made in recent years, and it will tend to perpetuate the widespread numerical participation of Negroes in the industry."

The optimistic view regarding Negroes in the packing industry is attributed by the study to the current numerical concentration of Negroes in meat packing, their long record of employment, the nature of the labor force which the newer Negro workers have replaced, and the widespread participation of Negroes in the United Packinghouse Workers of America (CIO).

Another CIO union, the United Steelworkers of America, is said to be an important factor in determining the status of Negro workers in the iron and steel industry.

The first significant upgrading of Negroes in iron and steel was realized in 1942, when, in response to wartime labor needs, they began to secure upgrading on the basis of their seniority.

"In departments and plants from which Negroes had been excluded the union occassionally joined government in urging the acceptance of Negroes," Weaver declares, "or in some cases it has taken the initiative. The union has also been effective in overcoming the opposition of white workers to the entrance of Negroes into better types of new areas of work."

Although Negroes are expected to be displayed in new departments in the steel industry where they have moved to better jobs during the war, the study indicates that, "In those plants where Negroes have achieved promotion within given departments, the prevalent union seniority agreements will give job security and occupational status to the older Negro worker."

OTHER INDUSTRIES

In other industries—such as electrical equipment, agencies and turbines, machinery and scientific instruments, where Negro employment was negligible before the war—Weaver asserts that "in general, union security, regardless of type, will accelerate the displacement of colored workers and reduce, if not destroy, their occupational gains."

Although Weaver observes that "the simplest solution to the seniority problem as it affects Negroes may seem to be the adjustment of the rules in those instances where injustice will result," he indicates the serious limitations of such an approach to the problem. "It is not consistent with the basic principles of the concept (of seniority)," he comments.

The study indicates that there is already a strong movement to relax seniority rules so as to give hiring preference to veterans with no job experience.

"Seniority adjustments for Negroes, if widespread, would probably become the basis for a drive to effect preferential employment for veterans without previous seniority," Weaver warns. "If . . . such a development should occur, and if in its wake unions were destroyed, it seems likely that much of the resentment against the destruction of these unions would be transferred from the veteran to the Negro."

Copies of the study of "Seniority and the Negro Worker" may be secured from the American Council on Race Relations.

The Best of the Worst of War, American Style

A Review by George Dilkes

"E" COMPANY: By Frank O'Rourke; 166 pp. Simon & Schuster. $2.

"'E' Company" by Frank O'Rourke is the first publication of Simon & Schuster's Venture Press, a special list devoted to the discovery, publication and promotion of fresh and outstanding literary talent. "'E' Company" promises well for the Venture. It is the story of a crack company of American infantry, how it was molded from the raw material of the draft, how it trained, maneuvered in Louisiana, shipped to an African beachhead and later chased Rommel across the hump with many fatalities and much honor.

Frank O'Rourke, the author, has been out of the Army since the fall of 1943. This circumstance may account for the balance and proportion of "'E' Company," which, together with its catholicity, that "quality of being large-minded or comprehensive in views, feelings, tastes and sympathies," give the book its originality so far as recent books dealing with the war are concerned.

Objective and cold-eyed without being "realistic," "'E' Company" shows how most men in the Army will do what must be done, and how they can do it, combining intelligence with art, tenderness, surface toughness with basic good humor, roughness of manner with a subtlety of consideration. Proust look like a wolf-boy. Here is the best of the worst of warfare, so much during these years. The American style.

This is not a traditional novel of character. The group, the company, is the hero, as it must be with modern novels. The men who compose "'E' Company" contribute their individualities, good, bad and indifferent, to the personality of the company. But, of course, individuals stand out. Lieutenant Dobbs—25, sober-faced Arkansan, is responsible for bringing these Americans through battle with as few casualties as possible consistent with winning the fights. The most interesting character is Debler, the non-com who always has complete control of the situation, the altogether competent man. The best of soldiers, he was born knowing the secret it took Emerson many years to discover, that life consists of surfaces, and that the art of life is the art of skating well on them.

It's a pity, in a way, that not until the end of the war are we beginning to get some of the books about Americans in warfare that we have needed so much during these years. The English have a wonderful set of books that, without making things pretty or unconscious guid, show how all sorts of Englishmen have conducted themselves in combat. The English not only have these books, but know how to use them. Our list is paltry! Stephen Crane's "The Red Badge of Courage." What else? Most of our traditional war books are tangential, like "The Enormous Room," or egocentric, like "Three Soldiers." Whatever their standards and patterns of behavior is one of the crowning hazards of being an American.

There is little to criticize in this book. A hint of racial prejudice is swept up and controverted in the acceptance of American soldiers as people, with all the importance and dignity adhering to the simple title of humanity. There is a tendency to state rather than to present; but considering the briefness of "'E' Company," lapses of this sort are few and almost negligible. The book is a compact gem.

Louisville, Ky.

Brazil--A Practical Melting-Pot

N.Y. Times 11.4

BRAZIL: An Interpretation. By Gilberto Freyre. 179 pp. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.

By MILDRED ADAMS

WHAT part will the countries to the south of us take in the post-war world? Will they be content to follow the industrial north and imitate its material progress? Or will they, true to their past genius, point out new paths in terms of the humanities and what are now called the social sciences? Gilberto Freyre, brilliant young sociologist from Brazil, foreshadows for his country a possible answer in this book, made up of lectures which he delivered at Indiana University last winter. One would have liked to hear the reactions of his Midwestern students to his proposition that Brazil's great lesson for the modern world lies in her successful fusion of races and her consequent development of a true American, non-European, type.

Mr. Freyre begins his analysis with the European backgrounds of Brazilian history, and his first sentence reads, "Brazil, which was discovered and colonized by the Portuguese, is sometimes called Portuguese America." That statement may still have news value for a national magazine which, not so many years ago, sent its first foreign-language copies into Brazil and sat proudly back to await a delighted reaction which did not come. The copies were printed in Spanish.

However, the author's intention is not to state what ought to be known to every schoolboy, but to examine into what Brazil really is. He finds it "not so simple or so pure an extension of Europe as New England was of old England," but a most complex mixture. Brazil has a background "not purely European but also African; not purely Christian but also Jewish and Mohammedan; not only agrarian (as illustrated by the importance of the farmers in the earlier days of Portugal) but also military; not only industrial (as developed by the Arabs and the Moors) but also maritime and commercial (as developed by the Nordics and the Jews); marked not only by the capacity for hard, continuous and monotonous work and by the inclination toward sedentary farm life, but also by the spirit of adventurous and romantic chivalry." Times N.Y.

THIS New York mixture, he reminds us, was made even more complex later by a heavy dosage of black Africa in the form of imported slave labor. And he adds:

As a whole, the Brazilians have what psychiatrists call a traumatic past. Slavery was their great trauma. For many, color remained for some time the disagreeable reminder of an unhappy social situation or an injurious episode in their past. Certain officers of the traditionally democratic Brazilian Army sought to impede its development into an ethnically and socially democratic institution by trying to introduce into it racial restrictions, by which Negroes and obviously Negroid men could not become officers; and this may be considered a neurotic expression of that complex. But it is an almost isolated one. The general tendency in present-day Brazil is to regard slavery as an episode over and done with, having only a social bearing on the history of the total Brazilian personality. Even Brazilians with a family or individual past that has nothing to do with Africa, biologically or ethnically, join Negroid Brazilians in a feeling, now general though not universal, that nothing is honestly or sincerely Brazilian that denies or hides the influence of the Amerindian and the Negro.

Mr. Freyre's discussion of the way in which whites, blacks and mixed bloods live, play and work together in Brazil is as valuable as it is provocative to North American readers, reluctantly facing the fact that race problems, on which they have turned their backs since the Civil War, are daily looming more acute. He states that "Negroes are rapidly disappearing in Brazil, merging with the white stock." Far from being considered a stain on the white stock, this merging is taken for granted. "Social distance" exists in Brazil as everywhere else, but there it is "the result of class consciousness rather than of race or color prejudice." Nor is this a naïve and unconscious Garden of Eden attitude which disappears when it comes in contact with other ideas. Mr. Freyre asserts stoutly that Brazil is "a really new and dynamic American community, not ashamed of its Amerindian, Jewish and African basic elements, but proud of them." He claims that "young Brazilians consider it more and more their duty to oppose all forms of race snobbery which might prevent Brazil and the population of Portuguese-speaking areas culturally led by Brazil from carrying on their vast experiment in ethnical and social democratization."

In this connection, it is instructive to note that even the Brazilian quasi Nazist or quasi Fascist organization—the so-called "Integralismo"—did not lift its voice officially against those who favor the incorporation of all race elements into the Brazilian community — a fact that suggests the strength of that tendency. Hence the remark of Prof. Lewis Hanke that Nazi racial ideas can expect only opposition from the Latin-American cultural fusionists, and what is more important, that "this group—the fusionists—is more nobly nationalistic than any other in Latin America."

Fusionism being the dominant policy in Brazil, that nation is out of harmony with European or sub-European white nations every time they speak or act as European or sub-European powers and look down upon non-European nations. But she is also out of place among predominantly colored communities whose race consciousness is stronger than their national consciousness. Owing to the possibilities for social improvement and cultural expression, there never was any chance for the Brazilian descendants of Africans to develop that consciousness of being a Negro which exists in the United States even in individuals of distant or remote African blood and of physical characteristics clearly acceptable according to Greco-Roman and Nordic esthetic standards.

The author is well aware that the problems which such a condition and such an attitude pose in the post-war world of close international relations are considerable. He has observed Russia's emphasis on race equality, and he has seen our theoretic acceptance of and actual shrinking from it. Nor does he rule out conflict as a possible result.

LEST Mr. Freyre be suspected of special pleading for a theory rather than good reporting and accurate analysis, let us look at his record. He was born in Recife in 1900, educated in Brazil and the United States, took a Master's degree at Columbia University in 1922, did graduate work in Tulane. Then he went home to apply the sociological techniques he had learned here to a study of his own people. He has written five important books, of which one, "Casa-Grande e Senzala," has been hailed by sociologists as a contribution to world learning. (It is shortly to be published in English.) He has recently been invited to lecture at five of our leading universities.

By background and training he is peculiarly fitted to interpret his country to ours, and in the present volume he does it against a broad canvas of knowledge of both America and Europe. His prose is witty and sharp, thrust full of comparisons with the North American scene which are by no means pitched to please the more color-conscious in our midst.

Of all the books that have been written from and about South American countries in the last five years, this is one of the most interesting. Its analysis is brilliant; its contribution to mutual understanding holds great value for both countries. A Brazil that can send us books like this has come of age and will put us on our mettle.

Converts

MPENGO OF THE CONGO. By Grace McGavran. Illustrated by Kurt Wiese. 127 pp. New York: Friendship Press. $1. N.Y. Times Book

NYANGA'S TWO VILLAGES. By Esma Rideout Booth. Illustrated by Janet Smalley. 126 pp. New York: The Friendship Press. $1. Reviewed

WRITTEN as part of the Literature Program of the Missionary Education Movement these authentic little books show their authors' familiarity with the way of life among native African tribes. Grace McGavran tells of a little boy who lived in a Congo Mission settlement and who goes with his family to visit a remote village not yet Christianized where the witch doctor's influence is supreme. Mpengo's experiences with a log turned into a crocodile and a pilfering elephant furnish plenty of interest for small readers. These adventures are presented against a background of patient friendliness on the part of the native Christians. Combined with the medical help they are able to provide, it brings mutual understanding. Eventually the "hidden village" accepts the ideas which will make life safer and happier. 7-15-45

"Nyanga" belongs to the Bantu people of Angola in West Central Africa. Here again are two contrasted villages. Nyanga feels sure at first that he would rather become a great hunter than study in the Mission school to become a teacher. The boy's conflict is solved as he realizes the greater comfort and safety the missionary way of life has brought.

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CONSTANT READER
at the
OREGON CITY LIBRARY

PRIMER FOR WHITE FOLKS—Edited by Bucklin Moon Doubleday Moran & Co., Inc. New York. 491 pp.

This is one of the most significant books of the times, indicative as it is of the pronounced trend toward the abolition of racial prejudice. The editor opens with a most scholarly survey of the negro, starting before the dawn of written history. He clearly establishes the fact that the negro was responsible for the first successful domestication and cultivation of nature's gifts, such as barley, wheat and cotton.

Moreover, according to him, the negro was the first man in history to discover and utilize iron and to fashion agricultural implements therefrom. Later, as is the way of man, he made of iron the weapons of the day. The negro is said to have been responsible for the earliest manifestations of dawning civilization in the valley of the Nile, so-called cradle of the human race.

From this point onward the editor takes up the long and bitter tale of the age-long slavery of the negro, in all climes and among all people, with all of its horrible connotations. By liberally quoting from a very extensive bibliography he brings the story right up to date. It is a most profound if somewhat demost pressing and potentially dangerous problems. No humanitarian, no student of world affairs can afford to miss this book. It would be well if it were to be incorporated into every private library and public school library in the land.

11-1945 Bibliography

Digging Into the Roots Of Equality In America

The Courier Journal Louisville, Kentucky

10-28-45

A Review by Rubin Gotesky

ARE MEN EQUAL? By Henry Alonzo Myers. 188 pp. Putnam's Sons. $2.50.

The defenses of American democracy have been many, some rooted in the mysterious designs of a beneficent Divinity, others in an ineffable faith in the perfectability of human nature, still others in man's reason. But few writers have tried to explore the historical roots of the American conception in order to find the specific American arguments in defense of it. This is exactly what Professor Myers attempts to do in "Are Men Equal?"—equality being, to the author, the foundation of any kind of democratic order.

Professor Myers does not deny the arguments, both native and foreign, of the opponents of equality, but proves them irrelevant. He does not want to deny the obvious, the actual differences between men, moral or intellectual or physical. Who would be so foolish as not to recognize the superiority of a Beethoven over a Chaminade or a Gershwin? But such natural inequalities have nothing to do with the function of equality among men intent upon living together in harmony. The test for the belief in equality for all men rests in its usefulness, in its productive function of bringing about better-integrated social action, better social cooperation. It is this test, too, which is essentially the test of the truth of equality; for equality could hardly work or produce that social harmony which all men dream of, if it were not true.

Like most great Americans from Jefferson to Whitman, Professor Myers is opposed to any doctrine of social inequality, because such a doctrine sets up a hierarchy of competing claims and involves the use of force by different groups to maintain their special rights and privileges against the claims of others.

At different periods in American history, the doctrine of equality has been attacked, each time upon different grounds. In Jefferson's time, the attack was centered on the idea of property, property being considered the one true criterion of personal and social worth. As black slavery became a source of enormous profit to Southern planters (and even to Northern capitalists), the attack against Jeffersonianism took a twofold form of justifying the economic advantages of black slavery to both North and South, and of sanctifying the economic advantages of black slavery to both North and South, and of sanctifying black slavery through arguments resting both upon ethnic and religious grounds.

After the Civil War, when huge industrial combines followed upon and furthered technological inventions and mass production, and socialist and Utopian ideals exerted a wider national and international influence, new forms of attacks arose, developed by Sumner, the American sociologist, James Stephens, an English philosopher, and A. Lawrence Lowell, once president of Harvard University and an almost forgotten American political scientist. Their defense of inequality rested upon a special interpretation of the doctrine of the survival of the fittest; they tried to prove either that democracy is a fraud or that democracy and equality are utterly incompatible ideas. Actually, the moral root, explicit or implicit, of their attack on equality was that the possession and the pursuit of capital were the only standard of moral worth and the only worthy moral ideal.

The American experiment in democracy, says Professor Myers, is not yet concluded, as some think. Each generation has learned something new and put this new insight into the broad substance of what is today the American ideal. Intelligent Americans have learned that democracy (liberty) is impossible without equality, and equality disappears as the right to think, to criticize authority and to organize disappear.

Today we face new attacks, either overt or covert, from totalitarianism either of the right or the left variety. In the left variety, equality is defended with the left hand, but insidiously attacked with the right by denying individuals or groups the right of criticism and of loyal opposition.

Professor Myers' book is an excellent purgative for clearing men's minds of the foolish dross and confusion which Naziism and the present form of Soviet Communism have produced. And he has tried, at the same time, to make clear the futility of lip-service to democracy when such lip-service means only the perpetuation of social injustice and social conflict. But the book has other virtues: It is rich in subtle analyses of well-known literary works like "Huckleberry Finn"; of literary figures like Emerson, Hawthorne, Melville; of political figures like Douglas and Lincoln. There are also failings of a historical and theoretical order. But in a book so rich in insight and intellectual courage, it would be picayune at this time to criticize what seem to this reviewer to be errors in theory and interpretation.

Writer Urges Own Culture For Negroes

The Richmond Times-Dispatch

Lee's Work Is Felt In Memphis Affairs

Richmond, Virginia

10-28-45

By Will Grimsley

MEMPHIS, TENN., Oct. 27—(AP)—Here in this citadel of the deep South, a sentimental Negro with a patriotic name is attempting to parlay a street and a song into a richer, more abundant life for his race.

He is George Washington Lee, veteran of the first World War who rose from a Mississippi cotton patch to the role of successful author, insurance executive, orator and civil leader.

"The Negro," says Lee, "cannot find his true place in America by 'aping' the white man and his virtues. The black man's destiny rests with the development of his own native traits and endowments."

These endowments of "music, muscle and native skills" Lee has sought to glorify and perpetuate in all his works, built around Memphis' fabled Beale Street, "the Negro's Saturday night heaven," and the thoroughfare's musical offspring, "The Blues."

Lee has written three books. His first in 1943, "Beale Street, Where the Blues Began" was a Book of the Month alternate selection. He followed with "River George" in 1936 and "Beale Street Sundown" in 1941.

He Seeks to Stir Pride

In these works, called by one English critic "some of the most descriptive writing in American literature," the author chronicled the muscled black men from the levee camps and cotton fields, "dead game sports" in their fancy zoot suits, and sweet-smelling ladies in plumage and finery.

He says he endeavored to make the Negro proud of the muscles and skills that helped build the nation and of "the sad, sweet songs straight from the unhappy heart" that contributed so much to its folk music.

Lee says that he does not consider America a great melting pot where races lost their identity.

Instead, he looks upon it as "a great experiment where men of all races live side by side and make their own particular and peculiar contributions to the development of the world's greatest community."

Parasitism Deplored

The Negro, he insists, must make his place in this brotherhood by giving of the best of his innate talents.

Beale Street, Lee declares, "represents a civilization within a civilization which does not cling parasitically to the white man's culture.

"The Negro here is developing a culture of his own, caring for his own needs in medicine, law, religion, education and recreation."

It is to promote this growth that Lee has steadfastly maintained his modest little office on Beale Street in the face of greater opportunity in the North.

The Negro leader is 51, looks nearer 40. He is medium-sized, energetic, highly emotional. A conservative dresser, unpretentious, he makes no impression until he picks up a pen or mounts a rostrum. He is as forceful and dramatic a speaker as a writer.

Born in Indianola, Miss., Jan. 4, 1894, son of a sharecropper, he worked in a grocery store and as a bellhop, paid his way through Memphis' Alcorn College. He entered the First World War as a second lieutenant, one of the few Negroes to get officers' training, and came out to launch a skyrocketing insurance career.

He is a director of the Atlanta Life Insurance Company and the firm's Memphis manager.

Sponsors "Blues Bowl"

Lee's insurance work, however, has to play second fiddle sometimes to his many civic enterprises.

The little Memphis dynamo launched the "Blues Bowl" game, an annual football classic here, pitting two of the nation's leading colored high-school elevens.

W. C. Handy, "father of the Blues," comes down each year to blow his famous trumpet at this extravaganza. Copper-colored belles do a snake dance between halves. The proceeds furnish Christmas baskets to thousands of Negro poor.

Lee spearheaded all Memphis Negro War Bond drives. The city led all Negro communities in the generosity of response.

A Republican State committeeman, he also is active in politics.

—Wide World Photo

George Washington Lee

Glorifies Beale Street

yet enjoys the good graces of Democratic Leader Ed Crump.

There is ample reason for it.

Because of raw and raucous Beale Street, Memphis once was labeled "the murder capital of the world." Now Beale is just another avenue—jumpy and jivy, but respectable.

The boys are too busy selling Victory Bonds or collecting money for a new Negro hospital to be shooting and knifing each other.

And George Washington Lee is credited with a large assist.

'If He Hollers'

Los Angeles Writer Has Produced Powerful Novel of American Life

By HORACE R. CAYTON

(The views expressed in this column are those of the writer and do not necessarily express the editorial opinion of The Pittsburgh Courier. The Editors.)

DID you ever hear the saying, "That's big gate talk"? It referred to the practice of slaves to make a lot of complaints down at the big gate which they would never dare repeat in front of their masters. For a long time Negroes, like all suppressed minorities, were afraid to express their inner feelings. This wasn't always cowardice on their part. It was just good sense. Slaves seldom tell their masters how they feel and get away with it.

Mr. Cayton

Later in our history as people, our writers and thinkers began to speak out more boldly and express their dissatisfactions with our country and the way in which Negroes were treated. The great autobiographic statement of Frederick Douglass, W. E. B. DuBois and James Weldon Johnson, to name just a few, began to penetrate to an extent into the inner feelings of the Negro. These writers, even though they told of the hurts of being a Negro, still did not reveal the real texture and tissue of the Negroes' existence in America. They did not do this because they themselves did not know the terrible emotional cost they were forced to pay in living in white America. They were afraid and incapable of examining their own emotional reactions to their hurts and frustrations.

IT WAS NOT UNTIL Richard Wright, with his great strength and genius, came on the scene that Negro literature began to probe the inner feelings of the Negro. Wright was the first Negro writer to say boldly and flatly that Negroes hated and feared white men for what they had done to them and that hatred and fear warped the Negro's entire personality—conditioned all of his behavior. Wright's two books, "Native Son" and "Black Boy," were landmarks in the Negro's intellectual development and have and will influence Negro and white thinkers and writers for years to come.

Now, out of that same tradition, comes a first novel by a young Negro writer named Chester B. Himes. In his work, "If He Hollers Let Him Go," Himes reports the inner feelings of a young Negro shipyard worker in Los Angeles. Many people will feel that the story is sensational. It is sensational, but if that is all that they see in it, they will have missed the point. Himes takes a highly dramatic, yes, sensational story, but in it he pours all of the insight which he has gained about the paralyzing fear and hatred which Negroes have developed toward their white suppressors. Lots of people will think that the book is sexy, even pornographic. And sex sure raises its ugly head on many of the pages of the book. But those who find only sex in the book are warped and juvenile in their thinking. What Himes has done is to picture, perhaps for the first time in American literature, the subtle horrible manner in which sex can be used to express racial hatred and racial revenge.

• • •

WHAT I HAVE been trying to say is that you should read "If He Hollers Let Him Go." It is a great piece of literature. It is a courageous and strong book and an addition to the growing body of literature on the subjective life of the American Negro.

Go to your nearest book store and try to buy it right away. In many parts of the South and perhaps in the enlightened city of Boson, it may not be on sale. Then you had better write directly to Doubleday Doran in New York for a copy. And if you don't get one then, write me and I'll lend you mine. I've got fifteen people waiting to read it already.

Books of the Times

By CHARLES POORE

"IF HE HOLLERS LET HIM GO"* is a story of racial conflict told in the manner of James M. Cain. It is a mixture of polemics and melodrama, with everyone fighting everyone else most of the time, pausing generally only for bitter arguments over the relations between Negro people and whites in America—and the polemics and the melodrama are carried over into the nighttime dreams of the protagonist after the heat of the day.

Chester B. Himes

The story is told in the first person by Bob Jones, a young Negro from Cleveland who is working in a shipyard near Los Angeles. He develops a pathologic hatred of white people as a result of his experiences there, and nothing the other Negro characters in the story can say changes his mind until the story is almost over. Then he sees a chance of calming his violent nature in his love for Alice, a thoughtful daughter of wealthy Negro parents. But then he is framed in an untrue accusation of rape, and that hope is deferred as he goes unwillingly to war.

The background of this story by Chester B. Himes is more convincing than the characters. You emerge with a much clearer idea of the shipyards and the town than of the people. The reason is that they are made to do too much, to have too many confrontations, too many illustrative experiences. And the unchanging mood of violence for its own sake, of tough talk for the sake of shocking, the piling of melodrama on melodrama, is very seldom relieved.

Can't Kill Them All

Bob is forever wanting to kill someone. He not only wants to kill a white workman who had insulted him, and a white woman who led him into his worst predicaments, but he also contemplates killing Alice when she resents something he has said, and tells her so. And when he is not wanting to kill someone he is wanting to hit someone, and frequently doing so, including bystanders. "I looked at him a moment," he says at one point, "I knew I had to hit something, so I drew back and hit him. He fell back against the wall, slumped to the floor." There are more lucid moments, however, when he realizes he can't kill or hit all the people he would like to kill or hit; the job is too big for him.

He hates members of his own race as enthusiastically as he hates whites. He hates Alice's father, who is a very prosperous physician and who belongs to an upper caste. He is hostile when Alice's father praises the Negro fighter-pilots serving with the Allied forces against the Germans on the Italian front.

Nor does he like the friends of Alice he meets at her house, social workers who are trying to do something practical for their people. The ideas they express leave him cold, and his remarks are meant to antagonize them. And Alice's house itself infuriates him. It reminds him of a country club in Cleveland where he had worked summers when he was in high school.

He is antagonistic toward white people such as Tom Leighton, a co-worker of Alice's, who are trying to solve some of the problems of minority groups, because he feels that they are condescending. Leighton finds that there is no pleasing Bob, as nearly everyone else does, sooner or later. All he wants is to release his frustrations in violent conflict, and he is contemptuous of the Communists because they talk and don't supply it.

Meantime he is having a good deal of conflict at the vividly sketched shipyard, where men and women, Negroes and whites, work together under constant tension. He has risen to a position of authority in spite of all efforts to keep him down. But he loses that job after an altercation with a white woman worker, and that situation provides the main melodrama, while his plans to kill Johnny Stoddart, though not completely abandoned, take second place.

Sees Himself Pleader for Minorities

Bob had had two years of college before he went into the shipyards, and Alice is constantly trying to get him to promise to return. Late in the story he feels that perhaps there is a way out. He thinks how it would be if he were to study law. He imagines himself at 40, pleading the case of a Negro youth, saying: "Gentlemen of the jury, let me tell you about frustration, a social disease, a disease imposed on peoples of minority groups over and above their control. * * *"

Alice had almost convinced him. She admitted some of the arguments he had used, but added that there were, however, other values on which they could base their lives: "Honesty, decency, respectability. Courage—it takes courage to live as a Negro must. Virtue is our own, to nurture or destroy. * * * This is more important, really, than being permitted to eat in exclusive restaurants, dwell in exclusive neighborhoods or even to compete economically with people of other races." These ideas were more appealing to him than Leighton's idea that the problems of all minorities are bound up together.

But the trouble is that it doesn't seem in character. It doesn't fit the character of Bob as shown on other pages, roaring around wildly, always having things exploding in his head, wanting to hurt everyone in sight. It doesn't fit the Bob Alice characterized when she said: "You're insanely belligerent. You think you can solve all your problems with your brawn. You have a really staggering inferiority complex, amounting to a fixation." And melodrama soon breaks out again, giving a completely different turn to the story as hate triumphs over good-will.

*IF HE HOLLERS LET HIM GO. By Chester B. Himes. 249 pages. Doubleday, Doran. $2.50.

Writings Of Negro Soldiers In Anthology

TUSKEGEE, Ala., Nov. 28—An unusual anthology containing the creative writings of Negro soldiers of World War II is now being compiled by Lt. Peter W. Clark, information-education officer at Tuskegee Army Airfield here.

The anthology, which will include both poetry and prose, is primarily a cultural enterprise. The deadline set for the receipt of all contributions is June 1, 1946.

Tentative title selected for the anthology will be "No Badge of Color," with one of its fundamental aims to be acting as a literary barometer of the aims, impressions, aspirations and creative talents and skills of the Negro soldier of this war.

Lt. Clark, compiler of the anthology, is a graduate of Xavier University, New Orleans, and has previously published "Delta Shadows," a pictorial study of Negro life in New Orleans. He is also the editor of "Arrows of Gold," an anthology of Catholic verse released by the Xavier University press in 1941.

Illustrating the volume will be Corp. Otto M. Clarrin, artist and associate editor of the Olympic Magazine. Associate editor of the anthology will be Lt. David D. Dickson, a Harvard University graduate. All three men are members of the military personnel at Tuskegee Army Airfield.

Bibliography- The Negro In American Life

11-1945

The Negro's Share

The Negro in American Life, by John Becker. Preface by Lillian Smith. New York: Julian Messner, Inc. 53 pages. $1. New Republic 1-22-45

THIS pictorial word-sketch of the Negro in America does in fifty-three pages what books ten times its length and more have tried to do with only limited success—bring to the great mass of the American public the real facts about the dark tenth of our population. On these fifty-odd pages the Negro's origins, place in American and world history, contributions to civilization and culture, outstanding personalities and present status and role nationally and internationally are graphically, honestly and realistically portrayed in a manner that even a pre-school child cannot fail to comprehend. Visual education has proved its worth as an instructive medium and this booklet utilizes that method with telling effect. 1-22-45

"The main reason for this [volume] is to make us think —to make us think straight," says the author. But it does more than this. People are more likely to reconsider their long held views and opinions when they can actually see things in their proper context. This picture-form monograph depicts the Negro's proper place in the framework of American life so clearly, concisely and factually as not to be misconstrued nor misunderstood by any individual of average intelligence. He who reads it will not only be made to think straight, but will be able to *see straight* the factual relationships of the colored man in our national existence. He will be made to see that the Negro, like any other citizen, has done his share, and maybe more, to make America the great world leader she is today.

The Council Against Intolerance in America, realizing how important an understanding of these facts is to the common welfare of the nation, brought out this unique work as a result of an exhibit of placards at the Art of This Century Gallery in New York City. The showing caused so much interest that the publishers concluded that the compilation of pictorial evidence deserved the permanence of book form. For as the country plans and prepares to live again in what is hoped will be a thriving postwar period, America knows that the so-called race problem must be cleared up, that she must first put her own house in order and practise the democracy she preaches. This abbreviated source book should be of immense help in the attempt to make this hope for a peaceful and prosperous future a living reality. 1-22-45

HUGH H. SMYTHE

11-1945

"Black Boy"

Public Opinion

By Richard Wright

Reviewed by Isidor Schneider

6-7-45

LITERARY EDITOR OF NE . MASSES,
N.w York

(Continued from Monday's impression)

Hostility and alienation has not only kept Wright from intimate understanding and rounded presentation of individuals but also from sympathy with his people. They are derogatory epithets and allusions all through the book "peasant," "wall-eyed yokels", "bleak pool of black life", etc. They are summ d up in these parenthetical paragraphs printed early in the book:

"... I used to mull over the strange absence of real kindness in Negroes, how unstable was our tenderness, how lacking in genuine passion we were, how void of great hope, how timid our joy, how bare our tradition, how hollow our memories, how lacking we were in those intangible sentiments that bind man to man, and how shallow was even our despair. After I had learned other ways of life I used to brood upon the unconscious irony of those who felt that Negroes led so passional an existence! I saw that what had been taken for our emotional strength was our negative confusions, our flights, our fears, our frenzy under pressure. Whenever I thought of the essential bleakness of black life in America, I knew that Negroes had never been allowed to catch the full spirit of Western civilization, that they lived somehow in it but not of it. And when I brooded upon the cultural barreness of black life, I wondered if clean, positive tenderness, love, honcur, loyalty, and the capacity to remember were native with man. I asked myself if these human qualities were not fostered, won, struggled and suffered for, preserved in ritual form from one generation to another."

6-7-45

Following out the implications of the last sentences one would have to assume doubts, on Wright's part, of Negro capacity for culture. Its existence could not be proved from any testimony in the book. No reader would learn from it that there were any Negro cultural institutions or influences; or that Negro culture, even at the folk level, had made major contributions to American culture; or that a Douglass, a Carver, a Robeson had ever existed and stirred the Negro people; or that Negro struggle and protest was a proud strand in the American chronicle. It is, perhaps, no accident that Wright's own grandfather, who fought for Negro freedom as a Union soldier in the Civil war, is reduced to a ridiculous figure, bilked of his pension and presented, in possibly conscious symbolism, as somebody so impotent as not even to be of use to scare children into obedience.

Yet Wright's picture of bleak and shallow life is self-contradicted by episodes that the record compels him to set down. It would be difficult for any racial group to offer a finer example of deep felling, of family solidarity and responsibility than his own far-scattered family who came in some from Northern and Western towns, to assume the burdens brought by his mother's physical collapse. And it is contradicated in Wright's own book, written when he was a Communist, TWELVE MILLON BLACK VOICES. Wright attempted to break out of the isolation that BLACK BOY defends by activities in the Communist Party. As published the book does not go into those years but it throws light on the chapters of recantation, published elsewhere, with which Wright brought that phase of his career to a squalid close. BLACK BOY renders any farther speculation on the unnecessary, as it renders his own self-justifications more specious and contradictory than was apparent at the time.

The causes which kept BLACK BOY from attaining stature as a work of art are the same which distort it as a picture of the Negro people. Yet its very concentration on the negative, the hostile, the violent, leads into explorations not attempted before. His innate interests heightened by a conscious interest in psychopathology, Wright makes keen observations of the neurotic behaviour patterns and thought patterns produced by the race tensions in America. They form the major part of the second, and, by far, the most objective and successful part of the book. Set down with a sort of cold passion, they are powerfully and vividly realized. It is these contributions that give the book importance and a substantial compensating value. 6-7-45

"Black Boy"

"Black Boy"

By Richard Wright

Reviewed by Isider Schneider

Public Opinion

LITERARY EDITOR OF NEW MASSES,
New York

As authobiography *Black Boy* has all the faults of that riskiest form of writing; as a picture of the Negro people it is a distortion; but as a document of the psychological patterns of race tension it is unique, powerful and of considerable importance.

The fatal risk of autobiography is that the determination to tell the truth is frustrated by the accompanying impulse for self-preservation. The mind, fearful of its vulnerability in the nude, at once covers itself with justifications. That is why the heroes of autobiographies and of autobiographical fictions are generally nullities, cancelled out in the process of confession and simultaneous self-justification.

But Wright's form of self-justification also prevents him from realizing character in any other of his figures. They are all cast in active or passive phases of antagonism to him; all are obstacles to his self-fulfilment. By their antagonism he justifies his alienation. Their role is to serve the ego purpose of autobiography: "See what I have surmounted!"

6-7-45

What Mr. Wright reveals in *Block Boy* helps to explain his characteristics as a writer, his chice of material, his attitude toward people. The tension of conflict leaves its mark in the obsession with violence.

By the evidence in *Black Boy* these characteristics took form from some early childhood wound or maladjustment traceable only by a psychiatrist. We see them operating already in the child of four, as Wright recollects him, who sets fire to his house in retaliation for adult prohibitions. They are on view in the book in an almost unbroken record of hostility, cruelty, alienation, guilt sense, and violence.

The obsession with violence is particularly marked in Wright's early reading memories. This is how he recalls the story read to him by a friendly young woman boarder in his grandmother's house:

6-7-45

"She told how Bluebeard had duped and married his seven wives, how he had loved and slain them, how he had hanged them up by their hair in a dark closet. As she spoke reality changed, the look of things altered and the world became peopled with magical presences. My sense of life deepened and the feel of things was different somehow. Enchanted

and enthralled, I stopped her constantly to ask for details. My imagination blazed. *The sensations the story aroused in me were never to leave me.* ("My emphasis, I. S.)

In a similar vien he recalls a pulp serial in a newspaper that he sold in order to be able to read it:

"I was absorbed in the tale of a renowned scientist who had rigged up a mystery room made of metal in the basement of his pelatial home. Prompted by some obsure motive, he would lure his victims into this room and then throw an electric switch. Slowly, with heart-wracking agony, the air would be sucked from the metal room and his victims would die, turning red, then black." 6-4-45

The chief significance in these passages lies not in Wright's enjoyment of such stories but in the place they have in his memory. They are the only early reading experiences recorded in detail and comented upon for their hold on his imagination. Indeed, as Wright notes, they never left his mind. In various forms the closet of crime, the torture chamber, the images of locked in guilt, recur in Wright's fiction along with other fantasies of hostility and violence. What it fed on gives us the qualtiy of Wright's imagination.

Mr. Rogers

the mature author" and asks "Why should the author of 'Black Boy' . . . assume his life is important enough to make present and future readers curious about his rather uneventful childhood and youth?" I feel, on the other hand, that we ought to have more youthful autobiographies, especially when written with such frankness as Wright's. One of the most celebrated of all autobiographies, which had a great influence on her times, was that of Marie Bashkirtsev, who died at the age of 24. Had she waited until she reached maturity it would never have been written. 7-14-45

I LOOK at "Black Boy" primarily as a statement of facts—facts which, though unpleasant, should be chased out into the open where they can be seen and corrected. One colored reviewer called the book a lie. I think the burden of proof is on that reviewer because I, personally, found nothing in it that did not ring true or even sounded sensational. Most of the incidents will be familiar and even commonplace to many Negroes. What I got out of them as related by Wright is that ever-nasty meanness of these members of a so-called superior race, who have been taught that they have no hope for survival unless they "put on the dog" where Negroes are concerned, that low-down meanness and descent to despicable lies as exhibited by Bilbo and Eastland in the Senate recently. Millions of Negro youth are experiencing in some way or other what Wright so vividly describes.

Lewis says further, "As autobiography, 'Black Boy' is neither interesting reading nor a competent job." As regards interest, I agree with him to the extent of saying that the first eight chapters would be less trite if condensed into say, two or three. But from the ninth chapter onward I found it most interesting and a sociological document of high merit. 7-14-45

AS REGARDS competence, I

Wright relates of his seem mild.

Space will not permit here a discussion of the book, itself. It has many incidents which touched me deeply. For instance, the deception he had to practice to borrow books from the white library, there being none for Negroes. These "superior" white folk are so afraid that Negroes will get knowledge, so afraid that they will have aspirations other than to be porters and domestics. One, also, is impelled to ask what would Wright be now had he not the ambition to pick himself up and get out of the South. Released from the crushing prejudice of Mississippi and Tennessee, his genius rose and grew erect like a plant from which a huge stone has been lifted.

"Black Boy" will, I am sure, do an immense amount of good. It will make those who have conscience capable of being awakened, realize what it means to be an ambitious, aspiring Negro in those hell-holes of the South. For several months now it has been second from the top on the best sellers' list. May it remain on that list until the truth it conveys stirs to action every lover of right and justice in this land. 7-14-45

ROGERS SAYS:

Exception Is Taken to Criticism of "Black Boy," Written by Theophilus Lewis

Pittsburgh Courier

By J. A. ROGERS

(The views expressed in this column are those of the writer and do not necessarily express the editorial opinion of The Pittsburgh Courier.—The Editors.)

RAYMOND VAN CLEEF (white) of Woodside, Long Island, N. Y., writes me, "The review of Richard Wright's 'Black Boy' by Theophilus Lewis in the April 14 issue of 'America' reeks with prejudice. It is so unfair that it deserves some retaliation. In fact, Mr. Lewis should be severely rebuked for his intolerance." In find myself somewhere in the middle regarding this after reading Mr. Lewis' review and "Black Boy." Lewis treats the book largely from one angle and while I disagree with him in certain places, I feel that he is right most of the time from his angle.

Mr. Lewis' angle (or angles) is, in my opinion, neither quite realistic nor broad. However, he thinks that autobiography is a field "reserved for

think "Black Boy" is extraordinarily well presented, too. Some white critics have called Wright the foremost American writer of today. This, of course, is a matter of opinion. But this is sure: He has to a marked degree that first qualification of a writer, namely, to convey clearly and vividly what he has seen and felt. He is, without doubt, one of America's greatest living writers. What's more, he came up the very hard way. Of course, there are those whose judgment will be swayed by some of the "indecent" facts in the book, but I have read Freudian, accounts of the lives of some white boys and girls that would make what

Black Boy
Weekly Review

Richard Wright has again written a book that is a moving and effective record of a Negro life in America. Gentle souls will find it brutal, violent, and a trifle filthy. Undoubtedly, it will cause many staunch Southerners to rage at the uncomplimentary picture they find of themselves. Those of a humane turn of mind will be tempted to take refuge in the thought that the story is certainly exaggerated. For it is difficult to believe that the Mississippi and Tennessee described here are present day America and that children are still growing up in the same misery, terror and frustration. 5-26-45

BLACK BOY makes unpleasant reading, but it carries the weight of absolute truth. Its autobiographic, relating the childhood and early youth of the author up to the time when at the age of 19 he left the South and headed for a different life in Chicago.

Richard Wright's father deserts the mother while her two sons are still too young to go to school, and the mother is forced to go to work as a cook while her children roam the streets from morning to evening. From that time on, the boy's life becomes a series of shiftings from one home to another, from one city to another, always under the burdens of poverty and hunger. Often his clothing is too ragged for him to attend school. Except for two or three years of public schooling, his education comes from the gangs in the streets, from whispered tales of beatings and lynchings of Negroes, from jobs where he earns from twenty-fve cents to a dollar a week.

Skillfully the author builds up his picture of Negro reaction to Southern life. There is fear mixed with a resentment. There is suppressed anger whch has to hide itself behind laughing antics because the white world demands this reaction. There is always tension and fear that even one's expression may not be humble enough to satisfy the boss. There is always the desire to flee the situation which the individual can find the way to solve — as Wright determined he had to do even before (either because they do not have the money or the initiative) feel for those who can escape to the North and freedom.

No other writer of fiction has written so realistically of average Southern Negro life in the city slums, from its psychological as well as its physical aspects. Even in the progressive schools of fiction far too little is understood of the Negro in the Southern scene and too little has been told of the ceaseless day to day struggle that the average black man encounters there. 5-26-45

One criticism has been made that Richard Wright's life story is not a typical experience, and therefore cannot be taken too seriously as an indication of handicaps in Negro life. Unfortunately, it is too typical. The author himself is exceptional, and is so now in manhood as he was in boyhood. Many of his experiences that left indelible impressions upon him as a sensitive child, with usual intelligence and maturity, would still affect the less impressionable child who might never grow up to be an author to tell the world about his life.

It is true, however, that right seems to regard himself as an exception among his own people. His account of his childhood is filled with a sense of personal bitterness against men and women, mostly his relatives, who were caught in the same hopeless trap as himself. He has scarcely a kind word for any of the households in which he lived, admittedly as a problem child, during the years of his dependent youth. Frequently he accuses the Negro people in part and as a whole with lack of kindness, lack of hope, shallowness of sentiment. This should be strange for him to believe, when every word he writes of his own life tells of powerful feelings while daily oppression forced him to conceal and give no expression.

Wright's clarity about his own plight and constant blind spot to the fact that in greater or less degrees all the Negroes surrounding him were victims of the same frustrations is perhaps caused by a common human quality — his intense preoccupation with himself. No other character, but they are names without souls or thoughts that Wright discerns. His attitude toward other reveals the more constant contempt that pity We leaves the belief that he alone feels the onus of discrimination.. As he puts it: 5-26-45

"Often, when perplexed, I longed to be like the smiling, lazy, forgetful black boys in the noisy hotel locker rooms, with no torrential conflicts to resolve. Many times I grew weary of the secret burden I carried and longed to cast it down, either in action or in resignation. But I was not made to be a resigned man and I had only a limited choice of actions, and I was afraid of all of them."

This self- absorption has a way of becoming a bit tiresome, but perhaps that is the prerogative of the artist. Perhaps many people who need to know the world that BLACK BOY describes will be far more impressed by this first-hand account of actual experience than they would by a broader sociological novel. Richard Wright has certainly demonstrated that he has the technique for such a novel. His earlier short stories, "Native Son," and this present work give ample proof to the most critical that he has command of his instrument. BLACK BOY is a good book, not the best that can come from Richard Wright's talent, but further proof that he is our best Negro writer to date, for whom the future holds much promise. — (From Congress View)

Puzzled by Richard Wright's Marriage
Chicago Weekly

I just completed reading Richard Wright's "Black Boy." It is a great literary achievement, a bitter, true story of the author's struggle against the life imposed on the Negro in the South.

After reading Mr. Wright's startling accounts of the abuses and treatment which he encountered, you can imagine how surprised we were to learn that after professing such extreme hatred and contempt for the white race, he is married to a woman of that same white race. Undoubtedly Mr. Wright's hatred and contempt (which is absolutely justified) was not strong enough to have overlooked this fact.

Since this is America, the free, everyone is entitled to do as he pleases, but with women in our own race every color, shade and hue resembling Spaniards, Jews, Indians, Chinese and every other nationality, it seems very odd that the same Mr. Wright, who has written this stirring account of his life, told of all his mistreatments, expressed his contempt so fully, could be the same man who would marry a white woman.

Evidently his strong anti-white feeling does not include the white woman. 7-14-45

How noble of Mr. Wright. — Mrs. A. L. Bell, Lillian I. Kinchloe and Mrs. Bernice Morton, Crown Point, Ind.

Takes Issue With Critic of 'Black Boy'
The Defender Chicago, Ill.

I just read an article by Sonia Tomms on Richard Wright's book "Black Boy." She stated that we Negroes should stop yelping about how horrible we live.

It seems to me that the Californian is very much confused. Why shouldn't we yelp about how we live? The Negroes that are bringing to the light of day our living conditions are 100 per cent American. She further advised that these yelping Negroes leave the United States. 9-22-45

Thousands of Negro boys have left the U. S. and many have given their lives for the U. S. while many are returning to the U. S. and can't find a decent place to live. This applies to Negroes of the north and the south.

The writer Sonia, should visit some of our kitchenettes in some of our large cities and she would soon see what makes Bigger Thomases, and on the other hand, she should see what a great part the government houses are playing in destroying the thing that makes "Black Boys."

No intelligent person feels good after reading Wright's two books, but don't run us out of America; rather let's stand our ground and try to eliminate these miserable conditions.

Dirty people, from both the north and south do not emerge from dirty, degraded families, they come forth from dirty, degraded, economic conditions. — Clifton Laws, Chicago.

Southern Negro Rips Richard Wright.
Chicago Defender Chicago, Illinois

I am a Southern Negro and damned proud of it. The Southern Negro is king of his race. Nine out of every ten famous Negroes, living or dead, were born and raised in the South. Our greatest men like Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, George Washington Carver, Joe Louis, Henry Armstrong and every other one that ever amounted to a hill of beans is a Southerner.

We Southern Negroes haven't disliked but two famous Negroes who were born in the South. One is Richard Wright, the author of that filthy hogwash like 'Black Boy," and "Native Son," and the other Negro was Jack Johnson.

We turned thumbs down on Jack Johnson when he got too big for his drawers. He thought he could buck public opinion and show contempt for the Negro race so we helped to push him behind the eight ball and also helped to keep him there. 9-1-45

Now Richard Wright is a Northerner. There never was a Southern Negro as dirty and degraded as "Black Boy" unless it was Richard Wright himself. And if I came out of a family as dirty and degraded as Richard Wright, I would not admit it. He has no respect for himself or his race if he didn't he wouldn't have written "Black Boy" and those other books that have cast such a bad opinion upon our race.

So we are going to teach that "Black Boy" a lesson just like we did Jack Johnson. He is going behind the eight ball the same as Johnson and once there he is going to stay.

We aren't going to stand for an addlepated black fool who can't stand prosperity to hold our race up to ridicule the way he is doing. He doesn't think we can absorb western civilization and he is always yelling about how horrible we American Negroes live.

Well, we wish he and all the rest of these belly-aching Uncle Toms would get out of America. We are sick of all of them.—Sonia Tomms, Los Angeles, Calif.

New Books for Children

The Afro American Baltimore, Maryland 9-22-45

A sketch by Ernest Crichlow, young colored artist who illustrated "Two Is a Team," the story of two little boys who find that working together is more fun and more profitable.

TWO IS A TEAM, Lorraine and Jerrold Beim, and Ernest Crichlow, Harcourt, Brace and Co., N. Y., $1.75.

Ted, a little colored boy, and Paul, a little white boy, had learned how to play together after school. Sometimes they played at Ted's house and sometimes at Paul's.

They decided to make a coaster but couldn't agree on the best idea; Paul took his box home and Ted took his roller skates home.

When they met again, they couldn't agree whose coaster was nicer and decided to have a race.

The tragic results of the race taught both boys that their coasters would have been better and they would have avoided trouble if they had worked together.

Ernest Crichlow, colored artist, whose paintings have been shown at the Downtown New York galleries and in museums and exhibitions, has illustrated each page of the book.

Written primarily for children of four to eight years, the book was released for sale last week.

SMOKE JUMPER, Marjorie Hill Allee, Houghton Mifflin Co., N.Y., $2.

Bill Herold jumps on a forest fire in Montana and finds all the excitement he expected during one summer at Buck Horn Camp with fire fighters in the Forest Service.

A 17-year-old smoke jumper, he was given the unglamorous jobs, like mending fences, until one day when he was left in camp alone and smoke was reported.

He had learned how to use a parachute and how to fight forest fires, and the chance came for him to prove himself.

He took off in a plane with the Kid and Walt and from the moment he set off, thrills began.

Walt was injured and had to be carried back to camp. Bill met a girl and a bear—and the fire was a tough one. He faces dangers with a love for his job.

Manning deV. Lee has illustrated the book in black and white. It was written for teen age children from 12 to 16.

WE HAVE TOMORROW, Arna Bontemps, Houghton Mifflin Co., N.Y., $2.

The success story of 12 colored Americans is told by a member of the colored race for teen age boys and girls, age 12 to 16.

The appeal for democracy is seen in the struggles of these young citizens who had both courage and ability.

Included are the stories of Benjamin O. Davis Jr., first colored graduate of West Point and U.S. Army Air Corps colonel; E. Simms Campbell, artist and cartoonist, and Beatrice Johnson Trammell, public health nurse in the South.

Others are Dean Dixon, a symphony orchestra conductor; Mildred Blount, a hat designer in Hollywood, and James Luvalle, both an athlete and research chemist.

11-1945

Richard Wright-- Black Boy

Books of the Times

New York Times
2-28-45

By ORVILLE PRESCOTT

RICHARD WRIGHT is a famous writer now, the author of one of the most widely read and hotly debated novels of recent years, "Native Son," an acknowledged leader of his race. But the way was long and the road was rocky. Not very many years ago he was just "a black boy in Mississippi," which means few men in the world have begun life under a burden of graver handicaps or faced more difficult obstacles. That he has gone so far, accomplished so much, entitles Mr. Wright to an honored rank among that traditionally American select group, the "self-made men." His success story does him great credit. The troubles he knew in his childhood and youth were terrible, the wounds he received deep. He carries indelible scars and still burns with bitter fury. The life he knew as a child is not over. It has not changed. Hundreds of thousands of other little black boys are enduring it today. Such a life is usually completely outside the comprehension of white Americans, either Southern or Northern. But those who care to can now share it, in Mr. Wright's "Black Boy: A Record of Childhood and Youth."*

Richard Wright

This is a story from America's own lower depths. No nostalgic memories of childhood are these, no sentimental yearnings for innocent years when the hills were so much higher. Mr. Wright's childhood was an obscene and monstrous nightmare, a malign inferno that might well have destroyed him utterly. He survived, but not unscathed. "Black Boy" is not the work of an objective artist or of an open mind. It could not have been. The neuroses, the overemphasis, the lack of balance and the emotion recollected in turmoil are the bitter fruit of an old injustice.

2-28-45

Shows Harsh Dramatic Power

Mr. Wright in this explosive autobiography does not suggest any constructive means for improving the lot of the Negro in this country. Like Lillian Smith, he can only display suffering and cruelty with harsh dramatic power, he can only arouse anger and sympathy. If enough such books are written, if enough millions of people read them, maybe, some day, in the fullness of time, there will be a greater understanding and a more true democracy.

Richard Wright grew up in the slums of Memphis and in the rural slums of Arkansas and of Mississippi near Jackson. His father deserted his mother, so the poverty he knew was double the usual lot. The two dominant influences of his childhood were hunger and fear, a gnawing hunger that kept him weak and half-starved and a fear that grew and multiplied and filled his entire life. He feared his mother's anger, the whippings of his uncles and aunts, the abuse of other children, ghosts, white men with their inexplicable and capricious cruelties, fear itself. Terror was his companion night and day, violence the norm of all experience. Foul language and foul habits, ignorance and superstition, primitive religious fanaticism surrounded him on all sides. The proud, sensitive, intelligent child looked up from below at a grotesque, outrageous world.

Some of the evils he knew were caused by poverty and ignorance alone and would not have been much different in Ireland or Iran. But even these evils were intensified by the shibboleth of color and many others were caused by race alone. Mr. Wright's uncle was murdered by a white man and no one dared even to protest. A boyhood acquaintance was lynched. He learned to be servile and obsequious, to say "sir" to drunken and contemptible white men, to conceal his thoughts and emotions beneath a mask of humble good humor and deference. Not to do so, to forget the "sir" or the "mister," to aspire to learn a skilled trade, to show resentment of sneers, condescension and abuse, was to invite "trouble." And trouble could mean death.

2-28-45

Author Distorts Bleak Story

"Black Boy" only takes Mr. Wright into his late teens when he escaped to Chicago. His experiences there and in radical politics will doubtless be material for another book. It could conceivably be an intellectually more interesting book, one more concerned with thought and ideas. But it could hardly be a more emotionally dreadful one. Part of the raw shock of "Black Boy" is caused by Mr. Wright's excessive determination to omit nothing, to emphasize mere filth. This springs from a lack of artistic discrimination and selectivity. He has not added to the bleak tragedy of his story; he has only distorted it and confused it with such material.

It is also obvious in reading "Black Boy," and Mr. Wright admits it, that his is not a typical story. He felt isolated from Negroes as well as from whites; other Negroes resented their lot but did not feel at all so acutely as he did. Perhaps with the hindsight of the years in which he has brooded and with a natural literary instinct to capitalize and dramatize his emotions Mr. Wright has exaggerated his sufferings. It would be only human if he had.

"Black Boy" has little subtlety, little light and shade, no restraint. It is written in a continuously strained and feverish manner. It is overwritten. But it is powerful, moving and horrifying. It is certain to be extravagantly praised and roundly condemned. It will be widely read.

*BLACK BOY: A Record of Childhood and Youth. By Richard Wright. 228 pages. Harper. $2.50.

Natchez Needs It

Atlanta (The New Republic) Ga.
Journal

Richard Wright, a Negro, author of Native Son, is one of the important living American novelists. His autobiography, Black Boy, recently published by Harper and Brothers, has been widely praised as an outstanding work. Wright was born in Natchez, Mississippi, and there seems little doubt that he is by far the most distinguished living individual to come from that community. Yet when Harper Brothers sought to advertise Black Boy in the Natchez Democrat, as they have done in many other southern cities, including Atlanta, Nashville, Chattanooga, Dallas and Memphis, they received a curt note of refusal from Mr. J. L. Lambert of the Democrat. "We regret," said Mr. Lambert, "we are unable to use this copy as it is against our policy." A telegram from the New Republic to the Democrat asking an explanation had not been answered up to the time of going to press. Mr. Wright's book, among other things, is a plea for tolerance, understanding and justice between races.

"Black Boy" Is a Powerful and Pathetic Life History

Chicago Tribune Ill.
3-4-45

"BLACK BOY," by Richard Wright. [*Harper, $2.50.*]

Reviewed by Paul Engle.

This is the autobiography of Richard Wright from his birth on a Natchez plantation to his leaving the south for Chicago at the age of 17. Those who admire the earlier writing of Richard Wright, and especially the violent rigor of "Native Son," will find this indispensable. Those who have never been able to read Wright because they were repelled by the grimness, will find this the best beginning. There is an ease, tightened now and then with unavoidable tension, about the writing of this childhood which you won't find in the earlier books. And the message is, of course, both powerful and pathetic.

3-4-45

Some of the individual scenes are superb: the little boy setting the house on fire, not knowing what he was doing, but hiding afterward in the darkness of the chimney under the house where he would surely have perished had not the fire been discovered. There is the desperate chapter relating how the white employes of the firm where he works tell him that the Negro across the street is laying for him with a knife. The white employes of the firm where the other Negro works tell him the same about Wright. Thus, it is hoped, the two Negroes will fight, for the entertainment of the whites. Wright finds out the plot and tells the other Negro. In the end, the two fight for five dollars, and the description of the manner in which they lose their tempers and really slug each other, against their will and in the knowledge that they have betrayed themselves into doing exactly what their tormentors wanted, is very moving and very painful.

Richard Wright.

• • •

Sometimes I feel that the dialog is highly strained. Two very small Negro boys are talking about God: "Have you really tried to feel God?" one asked. "No. But I know I can't feel anything like that." "You simply can't let the question rest there, Richard." Even for white children with many more years of school than these two ever had, that dialog would seem too adult and stiff. But this is a small blemish in a book big with intense events.

A Negro writer has, by the fact of his color, a certain advantage over a white writer: he has at once a powerful and dramatic subject matter. And yet that fact is also his great limitation, for he can hardly transcend it. Probably not until the status of the Negro as a whole is more precisely determined can a Negro writer make books out of normal, human, psychological material, rather than out of this always imminently dangerous fact of hate.

3-9-45

In that way, the very element which has made Richard Wright's life as a fine writer possible has also set in advance the limitations of that life. When the existence of a man is so dominated by one overwhelming quality, as the existence of every Negro is dominated by race suspicion, it is simply asking that man to be more than human if he is asked to write books beyond that suspicion.

3-4-45

But to be the first Negro to do that is the honorable burden we can ask Richard Wright to bear. He has, after all, in this country [and admittedly only thru pain and humiliation] had more luck and respect and admiration than many white men.

BOOK REVIEW:

Richard Wright's "BLACK BOY"

Reviewed by Layle Lane

To be both poor and black is a crime for which materialistic America exacts a heavy price. Since poverty is the constant companion of the majority of colored people in America, the story of Richard Wright in "Black Boy" is the story of millions of Negro children. The only variants are those of individual personality and of locale. The price of poverty and of dark skin is both physical and spiritual hunger . . . frustration . . . meek submission or misdirected energy.

A few of the strong are able to escape from the "Southern swamp of despair and violence." Wright is one of these. He is also one who can write of this swamp and interpret it for others, with insight and power. His story is honestly told with the same compelling discriptions of physical sensations and mental questioning as were found in "Native Son."

In Wright's home life he experienced all too frequently a blow or a whipping, resulting from strained nerves of a mother and grandmother trying to eke out an existence. There was also the all too common occurrance in Negro homes of the father's desertion and indifference to the welfare of his children. This hangover from the slave system, which broke down in every way possible, parental and home ties in order to make the sale of human beings easier, has placed a double duty on the Negro mother. It explains the high rate of juvenile delinquency among us as well as much of the violence Wright experienced.

It explains too Richard Wright's constant childhood hunger described so vividly . . . "Hunger had always been more or less at my elbow when I played, but now I began to wake up at night to find hunger standing at my bedside, staring at me gauntly. The hunger I had known before this had been no grim, hostile stranger; it had been a normal hunger that made me beg constantly for bread and when I ate a crust or two I was satisfied. But this new hunger baffled me, scared me and made me angry and insistent . . . As the days slid past, the image of my father became associated with my pangs of hunger and whenever I felt hunger I thought of him with deep biological bitterness."

Twenty five years later, when next he saw his father "a sharecropper, clad in ragged overalls, holding a muddy hoe in his gnarled veined hands", he forgave and pittied him. I was overwhelmed", Wright explains, poignantly, "to realize that he could never understand me or the scalding experiences that had swept me beyond his life and into an area of living that he could never know. I stood before him, poised, my mind aching as it embraced the simple nakedness of his life. From the white landowners above him there had not been handed to him a chance to learn the meaning of loyalty, of sentiment, of tradition . . . my father was a black peasant who had gone to the city seeking life . . . a black peasant whose life had been hopelessly snarled in the city."

Just as bitter as his attitude toward his father was his attitude toward whites. Inwardly he rebelled at their dominance, and those who came in contact with him, sensed this rebellion. He could not make "subservience an automatic part of his behavior." Only those who conformed got along easily, for the whites bestowed their rewards in the degree that "the blacks could make them feel safe and superior." As a consequence, earning money was a bitter lesson in the ways of white folks.

Shortly, the Negro elevator operator in the building where Wright worked for a while, showed just how race prejudice and poverty debased a man. For a quarter, he would forget his indignation about the wrongs of his people and resort to the most degrading clowning. "Quarters is scarce" was his explanation.

"Providing an economy in which quarters are plentiful for all who work, will make possible the dream of Black Boy heading North . . . that life can be lived with dignity," is the plea of the book.

"Black Boy" On Best Seller List

NEW YORK (C) — 415,000 copies of Richard Wright's newest best seller "Black Boy" are in print. The figure includes 325,000 copies which are being distributed by the Book of the Month Club.

(Editor's note — In Boston "Black Boy" is third on Best Sellers non-fiction list.)

Letter to The Redhead

My Dear Louise:

Even though "Black Boy" is a Book-of-the-Month choice, I think you will be sorry if you finish reading it. It is dirty and vulgar in spots, without purpose or excuse.

Richard Wright presents it as the factual story of his boyhood, but it is largely fiction. No man approaching middle age can remember the words spoken by himself and others and the emotions he felt at the age of four or six.

As propaganda, meant for a particular audience, the book will be a success, for it is dramatic and convincing; but you must remember that all propaganda is designed to convince people, not to give them the unbiased truth.

Wright fails to mention two fundamental truths which you must know in order to understand your country's social problems.

The first is historical. This was once a red man's country. Then white men came with better weapons and made it a white man's country. They built the world's greatest civilization, but in the process they committed many crimes, chief of which was the introduction of slavery.

Slavery cannot be excused, but a curse may be changed into a blessing.

Slaves were still being smuggled into America as late as 85 years ago. The fathers of some living American Negroes, and the grandfathers of many, were born in Africa. Yet after the slaves were set free 80 years ago, and legally qualified to inherit a ready-made civilization, many of their race were able to achieve in two or three generations the degree of progress and enlightenment for which the white race required ten thousand years.

No other race in history was ever so richly compensated. Except for the crime of slavery, all Negroes would still be in Africa, in all particulars as the natives are.

The other fact is social. It is not mentioned by reformers and uplifters, for it embarrasses them. They have no intention of changing it.

The fact is that the world's chief discrimination is against poverty.

Does anybody try to gain social equality for the poor?

Jim Crow is economic as well as racial. What is it but Jim Crow when beautiful residential sections, fine resorts, the best restaurants and even some churches bear the invisible sign: "Poor people not allowed"?

The poor white boy—the dirt-poor kind, forced to live in squalor and ugliness—feels every shame and humiliation, every bitterness and resentment and rebellion felt by a poor Negro boy.

The curse of civilization is poverty. Get rid of that and few "social problems" will remain.

DAD.

Richard Wright's Story

Editor of The Times-Dispatch:

"A Reader" from Lawrenceville deprecates Richard Wright's "Black Boy" on the grounds that the talented Negro "intensifies" the hatred between the white and Negro by "digging up wounds from the past," when it is time and education that will cause the Negro "to be recognized as an equal." I do not see how events in the formative youth of a man now in his thirties can be called "from the past"; and when a man's simple story of his suffering is called inciting hatred, I do not see how time can affect an educational program which so refuses to face facts.

That "Reader" is unwilling to face facts is indicated by his calling Wright's autobiography "exaggerated," and by assuming that his story of man's inhumanity to man is a plea for equality. What Wright asked for, by implication, was economic opportunity and social justice—the same things that thousands of his race are fighting for in our armies to provide for every nation on earth. And on this appeal, "Reader" further assumes that Wright is keeping "the flame of hatred burning between the two races." Could it be that it is "Reader" who hates the Negro, and has his own flame burn brighter when a Negro writes of the indignities put upon him? Or, if he is sincere in his belief in education as a remedy, what program does "Reader" suggest for the Negroes besides asking them silently to bear whatever is put upon them and wait for generations to come to have something they are not even asking for? Wright is educated. He can articulate the humiliations that were his lot. But that plainly is not the sort of education "Reader" means. But what other kind is there? What other way has man risen except by giving voice to his sorrows and burdens and discontent? Is not the very expression a hope for tomorrow? But "Reader" would have Richard Wright remain mute, because he inflames the hatred between races. Why should the pain a man has suffered incite hate, whatever one's color?

It could be that "Reader" wishes the Negro to "stay in his place," that nice, cozy place worked out for him by his superiors, where he has learned adeptly to play at "Old Black Joe," the "beloved and faithful Uncle Tom," a real character. But Richard Wright has the education "Reader" asks for, and he doesn't want to play the role the white man has allotted him. Furthermore, he is an artist, and he can make known his unwillingness to play that role. But "Reader" does not want to hear. "Reader" wants to leave it to time. It could be that education should start with the whites. Richard Wright seems to be doing all right, in spite of all effort to crush him in his youth and to silence him now. Justice has always done all right, sooner or later, but never by waiting for those on top to be educated to the point of releasing any privileges.

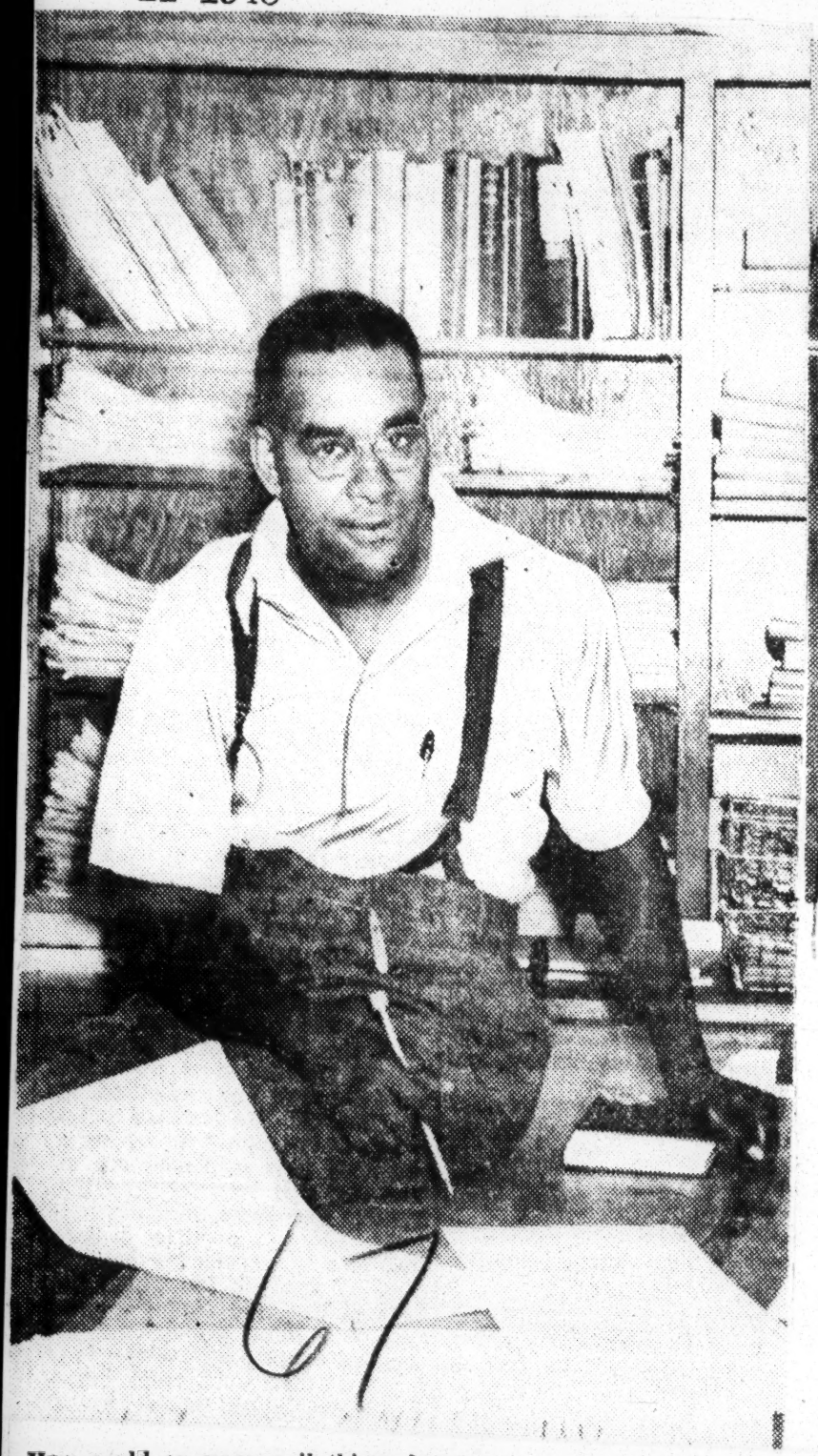
Wright is a man, and he told a bitter story of what can happen to a man in this country in these times. He happened to be a black man. Does he deserve less of a hearing for that? If you think so, don't write piously of time and education. Try to find Hitler's successor and join up. For America is supposed to be a Christian world, and wasn't it the Founder of Christianity who said, "Do unto others"?

WHITE BOY.

Richmond.

11-1945

Black Boy-Richard Wright



How could so many evil things happen to a pleasant-faced guy like Richard Wright?

This is Richard Wright at home with his white wife and their daughter, Julia. (Carter photo)

Comment by Samuel Sillen

Richard Wright's Book Marked By Rejection of His People

Daily Worker N.Y. 3-9-45

Scalding images of hate and fear, violence and flight dominate Richard Wright's account of his childhood and adolescence in Black Boy (Harper, $2.50). In this autobiographical study, ending with his departure from the South to Chicago, Wright seeks to project the shocks and tensions of a personality that was permitted by a hostile culture to express itself only through "rejection, rebellion, and aggression."

The pattern of violent hostility unfolds from the opening page, where the four-year-old child is described as angry, impatient, sulky, bored, resentful, filled with dread of punishment by his family. The child burns down his house and is lashed into unconsciousness by his mother. To mock the authority of his father, whom he hates "with a deep biological bitterness," he strangles a kitten, which "gasped, slobbered, spun, doubled, clawed the air frantically; finally its mouth gaped and its pink-white tongue shot out stiffly." 3-9-45

MARGIN OF HYSTERIA

As he grew up, hungry, lonely, whipped, humiliated, "a drunkard in my sixth year," consumed by dread and distrust, the boy lived on the margin of hysteria. "In a confused and vague way," Wright recalls, "I knew that I was doing more running away from than running toward something." Always fighting, "because I felt I had to keep from being crushed, to fend off continuous attack," he took to melodramatic novels "to feed that thirst for violence that was in me, for intrigue, for plotting, for secrecy, for bloody murders."

He fends off "attacks" from his family. He takes a knife against an aunt, two razors against an uncle. He hits back at the religious fanaticism of his grandmother and mother. He expresses hostility toward his grandfather, who had fought with the Union troops in the Civil War. The father whom he hated early deserted his wife for another woman.

As the story proceeds, "A dread of white people now came to live permanently in my feelings and imagination." The hostility toward his family ("There were more violent quarrels in our deeply religious home than in the home of a gangster, a burglar, or a prostitute . . .") now broadens into a continuous fight, necessarily under the surface, against his boorish, menacing, white-supremacy employers, who treated him with a sadistic and ignorant cruelty which drove him to lie, steal, and finally to flee.

BLIND SUBJECTIVITY 3-9-45

In some passages, Black Boy approaches dignity as an indictment of a Jimcrow society which, through "its cowardice, its heritage of guilt and blood, its burden of anxiety and compulsive cruelty," seeks to crush every vestige of human dignity and aspiration in the Negro. Certainly, the description of how Wright is egged on to fight another Negro for the pleasure of white observers, is a memorable unmasking of the white-supremacy mentality. In such passages, particularly where he can fully exploit the vocabulary of violence, Wright again, as in Native Son, reveals his striking gifts as a narrative artist.

And in other passages, almost in spite of that "ruthless objectivity" for which he has been so lavishly and superficially praised, Wright uses the language of human warmth: "My mother's suffering grew into a symbol in my mind, gathering to itself all the poverty, the ignorance, the helplessness; the painful, baffling, hunger-ridden days and hours; the restless moving, the futile seeking, the uncertainty, the fear, the dread; the meaningless pain and the endless suffering."

But in other sections Wright speaks with contempt, and even in this passage, the mother is seen not in and of herself but as a "symbol" for the author's ideas and emotions. This is characteristic. For, as W. E. B. DuBois so perceptively noted in his Herald Tribune review last Sunday, "The hero is interested in himself, is self-centered to the exclusion of everybody and everything else." His ruthless objectivity is in reality blind subjectivity. And it is all the more tyrannical because Wright again and again insists that he has achieved clarity and perspective on the years he describes.

Actually, he is in revolt against everything but the despotism of his ego.

BIGOTED JUDGMENTS

Most objectionably, this boundlessly self-centered destructiveness expresses itself in Wright's bigoted judgments of his own people, judgments written from a presumably "mature" point of view. He writes —and I apologize for the quotation: "After I had outlived the shocks of childhood, after the habit of reflection had been born in me, I used to mull over the strange absence of real kindness in Negroes, how unstable was our tenderness, how lacking in genuine passion we were, how void of great hope, how timid our joy, how bare our traditions, how hollow our memories, how lacking we were in those intangible sentiments that bind man to man, and how shallow was even our despair. . . . And when I brooded upon the cultural barrenness of black life, I wondered if clean, positive tenderness, love, honor, loyalty, and the capacity to remember were native with man."

This passage does not undermine the white-supremacists; it accepts and spreads their prejudices. I can account for this only by other revealing sections of the book which clearly show the utterly indiscriminate character of Wright's hostility, which extends not only to every single white person in the book but, far more seriously, makes it impossible for him to appreciate the full human qualities of any Negro, whether at the point of direct experience or in retrospect. And this blind and bitter antagonism is invariably coupled here with a swollen sense of superiority.

Thus, of some fellow-pupils: "These boys and girls were wiH-less, their speech flat, their gestures vague, their personalities devoid of anger, hope, laughter, enthusiasm, passion, or despair. I was able to see them with an objectivity that was inconceivable to them."

Thus: "Again and again I vowed that some day I would end this hunger of mine, this apartness, this eternal difference; and I did not suspect that I would never get intimately into their lives, that I was doomed to live with them but not of them, that I had my own strange and separate road, a road which in later years would make them wonder how I came to tread it."

This haughty sense of being different produces the impression that Wright is the one exception to every unintelligent rule he makes about the "black peasants." Dr. DuBois, commenting on Wright's serious "misjudgment of black folk," has noted that "the Negroes whom he paints have almost no redeeming qualities. Some work hard, some are sly, many are resentful; but there is none who is ambitious, successful or really intelligent." This autobiography, to be sure, is an almost clinical search for "himself," but in seeing the world as "himself and his suffering," Wright loses creative contact with the people through whom he could understand the meaning of his own life. Indeed, of all the people in his book, Wright might say, as in an early passage about some children: " . . . instead of my leaving drawing me to them in communion, it had flung me forever beyond them."

These people, treated with a subtle snobbism, are very clearly not those we met in his earlier book, Uncle Tom's Children. And this is not surprising, for Black Boy is a kind of retouched "autobiography," like the chapters on I Tried to Be a Communist, which the Book-of-the Month Club saw fit to spare its readers for the moment. In these two chapters, which appeared in the Atlantic Monthly, Wright continues his rampantly undifferentiated hatreds, his self-justifications at the expense of fellow Negroes, his flagrant falsehoods, his rewriting of history in the interest of self-magnification. 3-9-45

RUNNING AWAY

Here he developed the portrait of the young artist who, despite the desperate hunger of his childhood —a hunger which as he should know still grips the bellies of Negro children in Mississippi, has no concern with "tabulating the price of groceries." "I gritted my teeth," he writes, "as the daily value of pork chops was tabulated, longing to be at home with my writing."

Thus, at a time when the thoughtful writers in all countries are turning their attention to building a free world in which pork chops can not only be tabulated but eaten, Richard Wright discovers that his integrity as an artist forbids such sordid preoccupation with "peasant" concerns. He mistakes the philosophical foothills of the last century for the Parnassus of the present. He must serve his art by being against everybody, beginning with the family of his childhood. Despite all illusions of a new-found psychological insight, he is still, like the child he portrays, "more running away from than running toward something."

Wherein A Near-White Man Decides He Doesn't Care For A White South

Montgomery Advertiser 3-4

BLACK BOY, by Richard Wright. Harper and Brothers, 228 pages—$2.50.

He went hungry in his childhood—because his father abandoned his mother for another woman.

He was flogged unmercifully for something he didn't do—by his teacher, who was also his aunt.

He had numerous crises during his growth to manhood in the benighted South—but not until the book was two-thirds finished did the first one involve a white person. 3-4-45

And yet it all somehow adds up to proof of the general cruelty, worthlessness, megalomania, of the Southern white man, in the mind of nearly-white Richard Wright and in the minds of a curious assortment of whites, not all of whom are confined to other sections of the country.

Richard Wright was born on a plantation near Natchez. His grandmother was nearly white. "Which means she was white," the author adds, puzzlingly. Almost from the beginning he was a misfit, one gathers from his own book. "Already my personality was lopsided; my knowledge of feeling was far greater than my knowledge of fact." And this was a diagnosis of his relations with his own kind, before he had found his first job with the hated Southern white. "Every word and gesture I made seemed to provoke hostility," he comments—after a clash with his own uncle.

"Wherever I found religion in my life I found strife . . . . I began to be aware of myself as against others . . . . . I could fight the southern whites by organizing with other Negroes, as my grandfather had done. But I knew that I could never win that way; there were many whites and there were but few blacks." Random quotations from the author who quotes his uncle as telling him once: "I never heard a sassier black imp than you in all my life." 3-4-45

As the autobiography of a hybrid, the book probably would merit the passing attention of catholic readers. As a book written by an articulate negro, it might be termed excellent. But, weighed on scales that divorce its racial origin, it is mediocre.

Unfortunately it cannot be dismissed so blithely, thanks to its pointed selection as a "book of the month" and to its hysterical reception in "pre-reviews" of book critics summarized best in Amy Croughton's comment in The Rochester Times-Union: a "Scathing arraignment of Southern whites' attitude toward the Negro." Or one might quote from Frank Daniel of The Atlanta Journal: "Mr. Wright's record of his first 20 years—a story of aspiration somehow nourished on the blights of prejudice, poverty, and family dissension—brings recognition and revelation with sharp and salient urgency." 3-4-45

Dorothy Canfield Fisher writes the introductory note for the book in which she is "proud of the chance to help bring to the thoughful attention of intelligent morally responsible Americans, the honest, dreadful, heartbreaking story of a negro childhood and youth, as set down by that rarely gifted American author, Richard Wright.

For generations the Southern white man has prided himself audibly on his understanding of the negro. Richard Wright, who writes in his book of his own family's failure to understand him, undertakes flatly to contradict the Southern white man's understanding of the negro. And therein perhaps lies the book's greatest appeal to any number of persons who are not Southern.

—W. J. MAHONEY, JR.

Richard Wright's New Book Out Of Step With War Torn World

Detroit Tribune Mich. 3-3-45

BLACK BOY, by Richard Wright, Published Feb. 28 by Harpers. Book of the Month club selection for March, with an introdution note by Dorothy Canfield Fisher. 228 pages, $2.50.

By FRANK MARSHALL DAVIS For ANP

Your reaction to Richard Wright's autobiography up to his 17th year, "Black Boy," will be largely conditioned by your conception of the role of a writer. Should he feel free to write at any time about whatever comes to mind? Or does he, in the midst of an all-out war against fascism, when every intelligent person knows that words are weapons, have the moral duty to use his art to further the fight for democracy?

I pose this question because Wright's book has little to do directly with the fight for democracy, when it could easily have been an important contribution. His three previous volumes, "Uncle Tom's Children," "Native Son" and "12 Million Black Voices" served a useful purpose. His latest creation merely accentuates the **religious fanaticism of his Seventh Day Adventist family, the desertion of his mother by his father, or the status of black folk in Dixie. With only a few years of formal schooling, he developed a passion for reading, determined to be a writer, and had his first story published in three installments in the Negro paper at Jackson, Miss., incurring the wrath of his family. After graduation from the ninth grade as valedictorian, he struck out alone, going to Memphis where an anxious mother sought fruitlessly to persuade him to marry her sex-mad daughter. At the end of the book he is preparing to come north for the first time.**

As you read the book, you understand the forces which made Richard Wright what he is today. You see the making of a complete individualist, even one who is determined to have his way if at all possible even though it means desertion of men and causes when they do not conform to his opinion of what they should be. 3-3-45

But I am disturbed by Wright's preoccupation with pornography. Certain incidents are related at considerable detail, it seems, only for the salacious efforts. They cause the reader to lose sympathy for Wright, the boy. But perhaps the author and publisher had their eye on possible banning in Boston and a resultant sales increase, particularly among the dirty minded. As a matter of fact, the title, "Black Boy," reeks with commercialism. The original title, "American Hunger," had both dignity and appropriateness, for the book tells of Dick Wright's quest to satisfy his hunger, both physical and spiritual. 3-3-45

It seems to me that the author, in his frequent commentaries thru out the book, could easily have showed the strong connection between southern reactism and Hitler race theories, instead of taking the long chance of having it drawn by only the small, observant minority among the thousands who will read "Black Boy." A craftsman of the stature and ability of Richard Wright could have done this effectively and memorably, thereby making his work a guide to action in remedying such conditions.

Instead he spends his time excruting such inaccurate generalizations as this gem on page 33:

"After I had outlived the shocks of childhood, after the habit of reflection had been born in me, I used to mull over the absence of real kindness in Negroes, how unstable was our tenderness, how lacking in genuine passion we were, how void of great hope, how timid our joy, how bare our traditions, how hollow our memories, how lacking we were in these intangible sentiments that bind man to man, and how shallow was even our despair. After I had learned the other ways of life I used to brood upon the unconscious irony of those who felt that Negroes led so passional an existence. I saw that what had been taken for our emotional strength was our negative confusions, our flights, our fears, our frenzy under pressure."

I could speak of the egotism which causes Wright to believe that the story of his life up to the age of 17 is more important at this moment in history than the world-wide struggle for human freedom and the stake of the Negro in this war. 3-3-45

When "Native Son" appeared in 1940, I termed it the greatest novel yet produced by an American Negro. Even despite my dissatisfaction with "Black Boy," I still consider Richard Wright our greatest master of prose. I hope therefore, that in the future he will again use his amazing talent for the benefit of the people at large. And if he has another book like "Black Boy," let it wait until after the war or else tie it in with the war.

A Negro Voices A Racial Protest

Courier Journal 3-4-45

A Review by Tarleton Collier

BLACK BOY: by Richard Wright. 228 pp. Harper. $2.50.

An ever-present, overpowering, tensely watchful consciousness of race, we are told, goes along with being a Negro in the South. Conditioning and inhibiting all actions and personality, it is a thing outside the experience of white men, only the acutely observant ones among whom have caught a glimpse of it in their colored neighbors. Richard Wright describes it in "Black Boy" more accurately and in more of its profound implications than any other writer this reviewer has encountered. 3-4-45

The author of the stark and disturbing "Native Son" has strengthened, by his new work, his title as the foremost interpreter of the Negro mind in its aspect of groping and rebellion, not only because of his perception and talent, but also because of his wide popular vogue. "Black Boy," like the earlier novel, is a Book-of-the-Month Club selection.

It is autobiography, in which Richard Wright narrates his experiences from earliest childhood in Mississippi small towns and on farms, through his youthful labors in Memphis, Tenn., to the moment when, at 17 and matured beyond his years, according to an account of precocious development, he entered a Jim Crow coach bound for Chicago in the flight from the South which he planned 10 years earlier.

Looking back on it all from the reflective vantage point of today, Wright says: "Whenever I thought of the essential bleakness of black life in America, I knew that Negroes had never been allowed to catch the full spirit of Western civilization, that they had

lived somehow in it but not of it.

This outsideness, he concluded, was complete and utter, imposed by a wall of taboos. "I now knew what being a Negro meant. I could endure the hunger. I had learned to live with hate. But to feel that there were feelings denied me, that the very breath of life itself was beyond my reach, that more than anything else hurt, wounded me. I had a new hunger."

His bitterness is controlled almost, but not quite, to the point that he seems actually to be objective. He argues that, in spite of their accustomed insistence that they understand the Negro better than people elsewhere, most Southern whites never really know, much less understand, the Negro. Negroes, he insists, present a mask to Southern whites out of defensive necessity. A Northerner on one occasion attempted to befriend him, asking questions about himself and his life, which he turned off. "Whenever I saw him, I felt in a queer way that he was my enemy, for he knew how I felt, and the safety of my life in the South depended upon how well I concealed from all whites what I felt."

He describes himself and his companions as acting out roles that the white race had mapped out for them, clowning, agreeing, conforming. "What," he was forced to ask himself until habit led him into the safe course, "must I remember to do and say; what is the exact quality of the laugh that is expected of me at this or that word or situation?" Too often at first, he reports, he forgot, or did not think fast enough, and so he suffered, losing many a job and catching many a blow for the familiar reason that his employers did not like his "attitude," seeing him as sullen when he was merely grave, "biggity" when he was silent under jibes.

The author looks back at frustration and hopelessness, and at the early acceptance of a destiny of rebellion, protest and flight. He protests effectively; but one may wonder to what had he fled, what he has found out, beyond the flowering of his own success, as to hope for better things. He fairly invites the question, because he says in the last word of the book that he had set out at 17 to see if a part of the South, himself, could grow differently in other soil.

This suggests other books to come, and it may be hoped that they will approach nearer to a glimpse of American hope. For others than he have been happier in associations among both races, in accomplishments which, however hard-won and small, are measurable for progress and human dignity. And some of these accomplishments seem to be not altogether small in their power to change the nature and extent of the Negro's "place," which Richard Wright refused to accept in its historic Southern definition. He has not yet suggested that the whites, whom he as a black boy in the South encountered to his hurt, may have been conditioned by the same lack of which he was aware, the difference being only in degree.

ENCONTA, ALA., STHERN DEM.
MAY 31, 1945

Concerning A Negro Story -

A recent autobiography purporting to tell the story of a colored boy's childhood in the South has attracted wide attention from the critics, most of it lavish in praise. Noting this chorus of praise aroused by the story of an unfortunate childhood, Simon Strunsky wonders, in The New York Times, whether this story represents an average childhood, whether this "protest literature" which is so often praised is in fact truth.

"Suppose", he writes, "a gifted Negro writer had set out to tell the story of his own life, and it turned out to be the story of an averagely happy childhood, of home surroundings where affection was not unknown, of cheerful school days culminating in a college diploma from a Negro college and leading on to the beginning of a prosperous professional career—would a story like that be likely to find itself in the best-seller lists?"

He wonders further about the reception which the critics would give such a book, probably dismissing it as just another "success story".

Mr. Strunsky wonders where we shall look for the truth about the Negro, whether it is to be found "in violent pages of social protest and hot indignation, or in the routine account of Negro life as it is actually being lived by the Negro people".

Mr. Strunsky, a sane and rather conservative philosopher, has hit upon a real truth here, but he will find little sympathy for his opinions among those who prefer the radical method, who by force and shouting and laws would improve the condition of the Negro. They will continue to rave and rant, and by their very violence will turn many Southerners, inclined to be sympathetic with the needs of the colored people, against reforms which might be helpful.

Actually, the condition of the Negro has improved greatly in our own lifetime. Its rate of improvement may seem entirely too slow to some, but to others, we must remember, it seems entirely too rapid. Somewhere in the middle there is a great body of opinion which wants justice for all alike, an opportunity for the Negro to improve his condition within the social frame-work of the south, but desires no sudden or radical changes in our sectional customs. It is on this middle ground, in sanity and justice devoid of excitement and loud outcries, that the South will adjust its own peculiar problems in its own way.

Outside assistance, well intentioned though it may be is neither solicited nor needed.—Montgomery Advertiser.

What Fear Can Do to a Boy

DETROIT FREE PRESS

MORE THAN a footnote to Walter White's book of the present is the second March Book-of-the-Month choice, "Black Boy" (Harper), by Richard Wright.

Wright

This is a bitter story of a boyhood in the South. It is not pleasant reading. But it sheds great light on the Negro psychology, and the power of fear.

"After I had learned other ways of life I used to brood upon the unconscious irony of those who felt that Negroes led so passional an existence," says Wright. "I saw that what had been taken for our emotional strength was our negative confusions, our flights, our fears, our frenzy under pressure."

The South will resent Wright's book. Many Negroes themselves will ignore it.

Nevertheless this sordid story stands in testimony to much that blocks progress and understanding. It discloses ingrained hatred and fear of the white man, masked by obedience and acquiescence, which may be factors for the future.

"Black Boy" Not Picture of Negro

Chicago Defender

It seems that I've lived in America a million years; it's only a life time. It seems that I've dwelled in the slums as long; that, too, is but a life time. It seems that I've known intimately, a zillion black boys and girls; there have only been those that I have met in the actual extent of my age, over thirty years. — In all my experience as a black American, I've never known a black child like the portrait Richard Wright paints in his recent book, "Black Boy."

"Black Boy," like "Native Son," is a problem novel. Its purpose is to uncover the deplorable conditions under which our children exist, thereby stimulating corrective measures. The objective is fine. I hope it works, but "Black Boy" does not represent the average life of the Negro child in America.

On nearly every corner on our neighborhood there was a tavern. As a child I remember seeing "drunks" staggering in and out. I heard their vile language. But I never saw a single child frequent the places or even stop to look in at the open doors. "Black Boy" had developed an appetite for intoxicants at the early age of six.

There isn't any question about the undemocratic practices in America. It doesn't matter if one is a resident of the North or South, as Black Boy was, the flaring discrepancies between the ideals and the realities are sufficient to floor the idealist and shock the realist. But it is hard to imagine a life like Black Boy's. It seems that someone would have come into the picture to redeem our faith in human-kind. Perhaps "Black Boy" is that character. In the face of all the circumstances a flicker of ambition kept within him. He even possessed the "foreign" desire to write.

Richard Wright has little pride in his own people for he says:

"Whenever I thought of the essential bleakness of black life in America, I knew that Negroes had never been allowed to catch the full spirit of Western civilization, that they lived somehow in it but not of it. And when I brooded upon the cultural barrenness of black life, I wondered if clean, positive tenderness, love, honor, loyalty, and the capacity to remember were native with man. I asked myself if these human qualities were not fostered, won, struggled and suffered for, preserved in ritual from one generation to another."

As I reflect about the human qualities of Western civilization, I wonder about the "positive tenderness" of the whites. Could there be much genuine feeling within the hearts of a people who could stand by and permit conditions such as exist in "Black Boy" to prevail? What kind of people are these who kept others in slavery, freed them in name only, tried to make sure that they didn't become enlightened through education, signed restrictive covenants to keep them living in the slums, maintained the idea of white supremacy? The only "genuine passion" that I ever saw exhibited was the unleashed spirit that moved the mobs to lynch.

How hollow are the memories of white America that send Gold Star mothers over to Europe to visit the graves of their fallen black sons in Jim-Crow transports! How hollow are the memories of white America that maintain a Jim-Crow army and navy in the second World War. Where is this grand compassion of Western civilization? This "emotional strength," this "clean, positive tenderness, love, honor, loyalty," leaves me groping in the darkness.

Negroes do feel deeply! Could they have given America folk music otherwise? It is agreed that our masses need education. Through education they will arrive. But I believe that the way of life of the Negro, the humble folk, with the white humble folk, is the only redeeming factor in America. It's the humble soul that makes life livable anywhere. It is he who offers a helping hand in the time of trouble; it is he who practices the golden rule; it is he who doesn't clamor for wealth and position, (the shallow possessions.) . . . In happy contrast to the materialists, the capitalists, the exploiters, he makes a pretty picture. It is he, the meek soul, black and white, who will one day inherit the earth.—Ruth Apilado
Maywood, Ill.

LOCAL ITEMS *continued*

The Author Meets the Critics (from left), Sterling North, Post; Richard Wright, author; John McCaffrey, the moderator; and Lewis Gannett, Tribune, over WHN

How Richard Wright looks at 'Black Boy'

THE OTHER MONDAY EVENING we slipped uptown to see what would happen when an author like Richard Wright—whose autobiography, *Black Boy*, is selling well and stirring up talk—got together with a couple of book critics. The occasion was Wright's appearance on WHN's program, *The Author Meets the Critics*, which is presented in the theater of the Barbizon-Plaza Hotel.

We got to the theater a little early and wandered backstage, where there were five or six people standing about and chatting. WHN's press agent introduced us to Sterling North, New York *Post* critic. North has a full head of dark wavy hair and a high, broad forehead. His rimless glasses, wide, earnest eyes and sober demeanor made him look like a hard-working college student.

'A very average Negro'

"I don't think you are going to get the solution in self-consciousness," North said.

"Not the solution," Wright quickly answered, "But I feel that among those trying to deal with the problem there should be some recognition that whites do in many instances hate Negroes, that Negroes hate whites. Just to pretend that it doesn't happen and to explain the Negro race in terms of your maid is the most dangerous fallacy of all."

Not long after that, the air time was up but the program continued for a while for the benefit of the studio audience. McCaffery asked, "Do you feel a community of interest with the whole Negro race?"

Wright looked at the now superfluous microphone and said, "One of the things that makes me write is that I realize that I'm a very average Negro." He laughed a little and said in a lower tone, "Maybe that's what makes me extraordinary."

No Solution In 'Black Boy'

Symptoms Re-Aired In Autobiography

BLACK BOY. By Richard Wright. Harper & Brothers. $2.50.

Reviewed by PAUL FLOWERS.

For an ideal, detached, and objective evaluation of this autobiography, it would be necessary to find a reader who lacks all vestiges of emotional feeling toward the problems of minority groups in the United States. Since, in all probability, no such person exists, it is necessary for some one who has a fair share of prejudices to strive for objectivity and strict justice.

"Black Boy" is the unvarnished story of a negro boy's struggle against his environment in the South, within the past three decades. The author, with considerable effectiveness, has delineated the difficulties he overcame in his rise from obscurity. Obviously the hardships and handicaps he met made a far greater impression on him than the fewer morsels of encouragement that came his way, but he admits, on almost every page, that he possessed a rebellious spirit, not only against a broad and deeply intrenched social system, but also against the mores and habits of his own people, even his own family.

Old Story Retold

His story of poverty, ignorance, the cruelty of his own father toward him, the inertia of his own people, the absence of strong family ties, and the frictions between his people and the dominant group, is an old one, a story told and retold many times. It relies on violence and scatology for melodramatic effect, and the author appears to be overwhelmed by his own sincerity. The trouble is that he leaves some of the story untold, as an advocate of any cause is prone to do when seeking an indictment or conviction. The greatest weakness of "Black Boy" seems to be its obvious tendentiousness, its extremism in seeking to make out a case. The author could have painted his picture with graduated tones, and possibly made it more effective. However, he made it an out and out propaganda document, when he might have accomplished more with deftness.

"Black Boy" has stirred considerable comment in all sections of the United States, as most "social problem" documents do. Those readers whose emotions are attuned to the author's views have hailed it as a classic, those at the other extreme have denounced it categorically. To the detached observer, if there is such a creature, it appears neither an earthrocking document as claimed by its enthusiasts, nor as an entirely evil mass of untruths, as charged by its severest critics. It is merely the melodramatic retelling of a story which most Americans know, or should know, by this time.

And the critical reader may wonder if a touch of fiction has crept in, for example, as when the author confides that he commenced reading Harper's, the Atlantic Monthly, and the American Mercury soon after he had finished the ninth grade. If the author, with such educational preparation, had an appetite for such literature, he was an exceptional youth indeed.

No Solution Offered

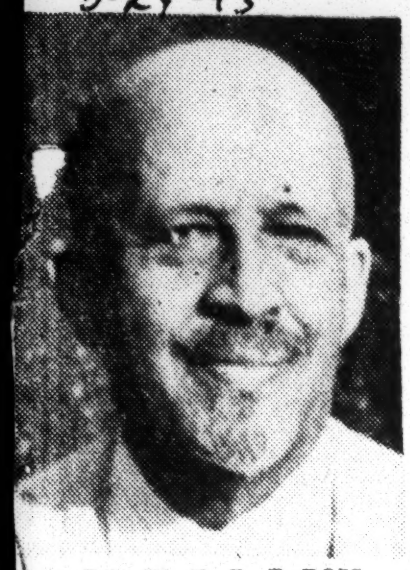
Admitting that a book of this sort must contain heroic doses of melodrama in order to attract attention, the reader may wonder why this or some other author does not eschew the familiar, the routine formulas which inevitably characterize such documents, and dwell for a moment on realistic approaches to a solution. The symptoms have been paraded until they are commonplace, but for some reason, possibly because no one has discovered an answer, neither Wright nor any of the others has offered a remedy acceptable to any of the parties concerned. Readers may be growing weary of this constant emphasis on symptoms and the almost studied avoidance of therapy.

Richard Wright Talks to the AFRO

AFRO-AMERICAN Md.

Author of "Black Boy," March Book-of-the-Month, Happy Over Favorable Press Comments on Book It Took Him Fourteen Months to Write

3-24-45



DR. W. E. B. DuBOIS
He describes Wright as a "loathsome, foul-mouthed brat." "His book is a fictionalized biography."

By MICHAEL CARTER

NEW YORK CITY—Every colored person who ever lived in America has experienced some of the things which drove Richard Wright from the South. Wright tells of these horrible little events in a critical autobiography titled "Black Boy."

His work presents to America, for the first time, a picture of how crazy the world looks to a black boy in the South.

It shows how, from the innocence of childhood in which race does not exist, the words "white" and "colored" grow into ominous slogans which are tied up with hate, lack of schooling, belly hunger, shabby houses and mean people.

3-24-45

It shows, fortunately in ways which are exaggerated for most of us, the contacts with the Uncle Toms, the aggressive type of colored person, the mean whites and the good, democratic whites. It also shows our individual confusion when confronted with certain phases of race relations.

Some Offended

Yet, it is a book which various groups of colored people may find offensive. The extremely religious type will dislike Wright's rejection of religion. He said that the holy water of baptism, trickling down his back "felt like insects crawling on me."

Another type will resent this: "I used to mull over the strange absence of real kindness among Negroes, how unstable our tenderness, how lacking in genuine passion we were, how void of great hope, how bare our traditions, how hollow our memories, how lacking we were in those intangible sentiments that bind man to man and how shallow was even our despair . . .

"I wondered if clean positive tenderness, love, honor, loyalty and the capacity to remember (and be human) were native with man."

Some colored people and many whites will find this heavy and rough to swallow.

A Superb Book

Even if you differ with Wright's philosophical observations and find fault with his sometimes violent, razor slashing, cursing reactions to situations, any reader will be moved by his exalted prose style. This is a superb book.

In reading it one also wonders how many others have had the humanity ground out of them in the life America gives us in the South and, to a lesser degree, in the North? And why did not the circumstance that produced Richard Wright, artist, not produce a Bigger Thomas?

Certainly the slime in which the seed was cast was better equipped to produce a Bigger than an artist.

Near the age of four, Richard set fire to his house and nearly burned alive his grandmother and aunt. This was a non-racial act. Many other colored kids have done the same thing. It is about the last non-racial act in the book.

Intellectual Escape

From this childhood, which had no memories of orange juice and cod liver oil, there emerged a child who read H. L. Mencken for intellectual escape and answers to questions he formed, but no one could answer.

He angered his own people because he could not honestly join a church or accept their solutions for the problems. He angered whites because he kept a straight face. He was unable to grin when nothing was funny.

He could not keep a job for this reason. He lost his one good job because he was engineered out of it by two belligerent whites. Wright could have told his kindly boss the entire story, but he was so frightened he resigned.

Working as a porter once, he was required to mop up the blood spilled from a colored woman's stomach—the owners of the store had beaten and kicked her because she had defaulted a bill.

Confusing World

He was confused when white

RICHARD WRIGHT
He retorts that Dr. DuBois is a sociologist. "I wonder what he's been teaching his pupils all these years."

3-24-45

It was from this world that Richard Wright escaped after he had saved and stolen enough money to buy jim-crow passage North.

The book has been well received by reviewers on most New York City papers, Time Magazine, The New Yorker and others. Two New York papers, W. E. B. DuBois in the Herald Tribune and Samuel Sillen in the Communist Daily Worker have quarreled with it.

"Fictionalized Biography"

DuBois questions the truth of the book. "It is a fictionalized biography" and "creative writing" rather than a record of life. DuBois wrote in his Herald Tribune review. He describes the youthful Wright as a "loathsome, foul-mouthed brat."

DuBois also wonders why this person "born on a plantation and living in Elaine, Ark," thinks he knows the entire race.

The Daily Worker takes a similar view. In that paper the review is titled "Book marked by a rejection of his people," but points out that in "some passages, 'Black Boy' approaches dignity as an indictment of a jim-crow society."

The reviewer also shows a relationship between Wright's "rejection of his people" and his withdrawal from the Communists.

DuBois an "Idealist"

In an exclusive AFRO interview Richard Wright said: "It is obvious that DuBois is a nineteenth century idealist. The things which shocked him about 'Black Boy' would shock him about modern life. He wrote the review as if he were not acquainted with James Joyce and D. H. Lawrence.

"Most startling about his review is that since Dr. DuBois is a sociologist, the things described by me should be well known to him. I wonder what he has been teaching his pupils for all these years."

Wright accused Dr. DuBois of being a "member of the talented tenth which has sought to deny the facts of race life because it didn't want to be identified with a people so oppressed."

A Different Story If . . .

Of the Daily Worker review he said: "I'll bet they'd have had a different story if I had not publically withdrawn from the Communists."

Of the other reviews he said: "I am very happy. This is what an artist works for—to see his work accepted and discussed by the people."

Wright stopped working on another book to do "Black Boy" when a Fisk University audience expressed keen interest in the childhood experiences he mentioned while speaking there.

Started in 1930

It was first titled "American Hunger" but he switched to the present title. "I tried to write it as early as 1930. I have been working on it since.

"I don't think it accounts for myself. I wanted to give a tongue to voiceless colored boys and that is what I hope I've done." He also hopes that his book will start an "avalanche" of autobiographical works."

I asked him why would white people buy the book since, as he says, there is much hatred between the races.

3-24-45

"Colored people will buy and react to the book only if it treats them in a favorable light and not because it's a good or a bad book," he said. "Whites will buy it because as yet there are no hard and fast lines. There are enough democratic people on both sides to give this and other books wide sales."

11-1945

Black Metropolis

'Black Metropolis' Author Urges Social Awakening For U.S. Negro

The Chicago Defender Chicago, Illinois 11-3-45

"The Negro must be made more aware of the psychological scars left him by such social restraints as ghettos and job ceilings, before he can sufficiently organize to counteract them."

So declared Horace R. Cayton, director of the Parkway Community House and author of the recently published "Black Metropolis," in an exclusive interview with the Chicago Defender.

Cayton's conclusions are the result of more than ten years of research, conducted in collaboration with anthropologist St. Clair Drake, which went into the making of their monumental biography of Chicago's South Side.

Cites Problems

An all-embracing study of Negro life in Chicagoland, "Black Metropolis" is not only a scientific study, but an eminently readable account which, Cayton revealed, "clearly shows the influences of the Negro's subordination upon his personality and environment."

Recognizing that "a slow realization exists among Negroes that it is essential for them to break out of their subordinate position," Cayton nevertheless deplored "the general lack of awareness and relatively poor organization" with which they are attempting to emancipate themselves. He declared that "the problems of job ceilings and Negro ghettos" demand the most urgent solution.

"Black Metropolis" originated as a WPA project devoted to the study of juvenile delinquency. But it wasn't long until Cayton and his assistant, Drake, decided to go beyond the immediate problem of delinquency in Chicago, and take on the entire problem of Negro life and Negro-white relationships.

Called American Dilemma

"The government wasn't altogether sure of what we were trying to do, but the result certainly justified our decision," declared Cayton, who regards "Black Metropolis," winnowed from more than 25,000 interviews, as a supplement to Gunnar Myrdal's renowned sociological tract, "An American Dilemma."

Born in Seattle, Wash., Cayton's climb to success resembles an old-time Horatio Alger tale. Determined to learn life from the bottom up, he volunteered as a sailor, subsequently dug for gold, worked as an itinerant farm laborer, and finally wound up in his native state, resuming his studies at the University of Washington, at the age of 21.

HORACE CAYTON

After graduation, Cayton served as research associate to Louis Wirth, sociology professor at the University of Chicago, but soon left for Washington (D. C., this time), where he acted as assistant to Interior Secretary Harold L. Ickes. Out of his work in the nation's capital grew his first book, "Black Workers and the New Unions."

Meets Sociologists

After a short stay at Fisk university, teaching social sciences, Cayton hopped off to Europe. An interesting sidelight of this visit was his meeting with Myrdal, distinguished Swedish sociologist, whose work he was later to supplement with his own study of the American Negro. A subsequent Rosenwald fellowship took him to Europe once again, where he spent the greater part of his visit in England.

The year 1936 marked the official beginning of his government sponsored delinquency research, and the unofficial beginning of "Black Metropolis." He met St. Clair Drake, at the time a fellow in anthropology at the University of Chicago, and together they embarked upon the work which was to occupy them for the next nine years and culminate in their South Side saga.

At present busy with his successful Parkway Community forum, Cayton is working on his latest project: a history of the Negro press. 11-3-45

Referring once more to "Black Metropolis," he declared:

"We have stated the problem You must rovide the answer."

Chicago, Ill- Times

BLACK METROPOLIS—*St. Clair Drake & Horace R. Cayton*. Harcourt, Brace ($5). In the same sort of cool, clinical case history in which Robert and Helen Lynd dissected the U.S. small town in *Middletown*, Anthropologist Drake and Sociologist Cayton have card-indexed the manners, mores and living conditions of the U.S. Negro in a northern city. Because of the tragic, potentially explosive material with which it deals, *Black Metropolis* is more engrossing, and may be more important, than the Lynds' book. Educators, politicians, ordinary thoughtful citizens—and perhaps even a few Southern Senators—may find in this well-organized, well-presented picture of Chicago's black South Side a required preparatory course in the increasingly critical subject of U.S. race relations. 11-5-45

New world-mindedness

Black Metropolis, perhaps wisely, is restricted to being an honest, entertainingly written and hard-hitting picture of the struggle of a minority to live in a single city. That limitation has possibly prevented the authors from dealing adequately with the almost unbelievable growth of world-mindedness among Negroes in the heart of what used to be known as the isolationalist belt. Today the Negro in Chicago, as in every other part of America (including the backwoods of Mississippi), sees his problem as not only important nationally, but also as a part of the exploitation and oppression of two-thirds of the earth's people because they have brown, yellow or black skins.

Five dollars is considered, by most Americans, a lot of money for a book. But Richard Wright's introduction alone is worth that sum. It is one of the most thoughtful analyses of the malady of race prejudice which this reviewer has read. In words that lash and enlighten, Mr. Wright pictures the problem of race against the national and world struggle between the forces of freedom and of fascism.

Those Americans who believe that the Negro-white problem in the United States is static instead of kinetic will be jolted on learning, from Mr. Wright, the extent to which the focus of the so-called Negro problem has shifted from the agricultural South to Northern industrial centers since World War I, a shift which has given the Negro consciousness as much as the segregation and mistreatment from which Negro soldiers and sailors have suffered during a global war for "freedom." *Black Metropolis* does not, in the opinion of this reviewer, pay sufficient heed to the fury which discrimination against Negro servicemen has roused in the breasts of all classes of Negroes nor to the deepening of their opposition to the pattern of segregation.

Most of the material in the book was gathered under the much-maligned WPA and other research projects. This only took the authors up to the opening of the war, and that fact is probably responsible for the sketchy treatment of the accelerated

A hard-hitting—and entertaining study of a black metropolis

BLACK METROPOLIS: A STUDY OF NEGRO LIFE IN A NORTHERN CITY. By St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton. With an introduction by Richard Wright (Harcourt, Brace, $5).

P.M. New York, N.Y.

By Walter White

WHEN I read Richard Wright's statement, in his brilliant introduction to *Black Metropolis*, that this book is "a landmark of research and scientific achievement," I wondered, remembering Gunnar Myrdal's monumental *An American Dilemma*, if Mr. Wright's statement might not be overpraise.

It is not too much so. For to call *Black Metropolis* a Negro *Middletown* is only part of the truth. No conscientious historian of Chicago or the industrial Middle West, or, indeed, of American society, can neglect in the future the magnificent job which St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton have done. [Mr. Drake is a trained anthropologist who studied at the University of Chicago and spent five years gathering material for the book, and Mr. Cayton, the director of Chicago's Parkway Community House, has also written other books on the Negro.]

There are minor inadequacies in the book, it is true. But they merely emphasize the enormous care and work which have gone into the writing of a lusty, raucous tale of a racial giant fighting to break his ghetto bonds.

Let us dispose of some of the short-

St. Clair Drake (left) and Horace R. Cayton, two Chicagoans who have written a lusty study of their city's racial problem.

Negro the potential balance of political power in 18 pivotal states with 281 electoral votes. 11-11-45

The increasing integration of the Negro into the organized labor movement and the transition from docility to aggressive, and sometimes effective, protest are but a few of the racial phenomena which Mr. Wright also mentions and of which America is becoming increasingly aware.

Most socio-economic studies are dull as dishwater. *Black Metropolis*, this reviewer is thankful to report, is more readable than many contemporary novels. It is going to be liked by neither the extreme right nor the extreme left. A good many Negroes will be infuriated by some of its revelations about sex life, policy rackets, churches and other organizations. But none will be able to refute much of these revelations.

With admirable brevity, *Black Metropolis* crowds into less than a hundred pages of extraordinarily readable prose the historical background not only of the Negro ghettos of today's Chicago, but also of the Chicago of earlier years. One sees here a picture of the waves of migration of the foreign-born, who first settled near the center of the city but moved outward to less crowded and more pleasant areas as their economic status improved. But the Negro, because of his color, is penned in a ghetto, no matter what his economic status may be. When he sought to escape the kind of overcrowding which produces Bigger Thomases, he was met in Chicago by mobs and bombs.

Walter White, whose review of *Black Metropolis* appears at the left.

With skill and humor

With skill, superlative industry and ability and with humor, Messrs, Drake and Cayton have told the story of the Negro's fight for jobs, of his struggle against both employers and trade unions for employment above the mop-pushing, spittoon-cleaning level, and of his struggle to find comfort or escape in social groups, religion, liquor or sex. The result is like a stage-set where the front of a house is stripped away, revealing the most intimate details of what goes on behind. The story is as fresh as the latest newspaper, and sometimes, as in the chapter entitled *Of Things to Come*, it is a bit ahead.

A lot of smug misconceptions about the Negro will be abolished for the open-minded reader of this book. For example, a good many people accept, and laugh at, "policy playing" as being a "Negro trait." But when Messrs. Drake and Cayton, in a revealing chapter called *Business Under a Cloud*, quote a loyal church member as saying laconically, "It takes policy to keep some people eating. That's all there is to it," one has no difficulty in understanding why a good many Negroes, hemmed in by job proscription, will seek any way out of an economic morass.

Black Metropolis is not just another book about the Negro. It is a first-rate account of the effect of American prejudices that had best be read and understood if we are to escape racial schisms which may rend America as effectively as the newest atomic bomb.